

IN THESE TIMES

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Oakland left, out

By Joan Walsh

OAKLAND, CA

Eight years ago Oakland took a political leap forward with the election of its first black mayor, Superior Court Judge Lionel Wilson, ending years of white Republican municipal rule. Though himself a centrist Democrat with ties to the Carter administration, Wilson sought and won the backing of the party's left wing and many grassroots community leaders. "He was considered a liberal, even radical element in the city back then," recalls Sandre Swanson, a member of U.S. Rep. Ron Dellums staff who ran Wilson's 1977 campaign. "Progressives supported him as an important transitional step."

But Wilson quickly abandoned his left support and forged alliances with the city's corporate and real estate interests, in the name of advancing Oakland's economic base by building up downtown. Over the years he has clashed with former allies on rent control, condo conversion limits, jobs agreements and other attempts to manage Oakland's growth to the benefit of city residents. On the city council the mantle of left leadership was assumed by Wilson Riles Jr., whose father, Wilson Riles Sr., was the state superintendent of education and the first black elected statewide. Riles became the mayor's most consistent opponent upon his election in 1979. Their rivalry became official when Wilson backed a council candidate against Riles in 1983. To the mayor's political embarrassment, Riles won 67 percent of the vote.

So when discussions began about fielding an opponent to Wilson in 1985, many people considered Riles a natural choice, including Riles himself. He formed an exploratory committee just after the April 1983 election, and formally announced his candidacy at the end of that year. To supporters, the race seemed a logical next step for the movement that had backed Wilson in 1977—it was time to replace Oakland's first black mayor with a black "progressive."

But rather than attracting the broad base that marked Wilson's election, the Riles effort has seen its support narrow over the last year, dividing the black community and even the left. He has failed to win the endorsement of significant left political leaders, most notably State Rep. Tom Bates and Dellums. Dellums' announcement March 8 that he would stay neutral in the race, following a protracted debate in his executive committee, sounded to many like the last shovelful of dirt on the Riles effort.

His campaign fund holds \$2,600 to Wilson's \$221,000, and as the April 16 election approaches even his staunchest supporters talk about making a respectable showing, not about winning. With the outcome of the race a virtual certainty, only one real mystery remains: How could a man as good as Wilson Riles run such a bad campaign?

From the outset, Riles' candidacy faced skepticism from the left political establishment, where the wisdom held that though Wilson should be beaten, that didn't mean he could be. Early in Riles' exploratory effort there were rumors that the mayor would not run for re-election, which fueled enthusiasm for a left campaign. When Wilson announced, that dampened Riles' effort. From Dellums, Bates and the people around them came encouragement to Riles to wait until 1989, when Wilson would be ineligible to run again. But if he was determined to run, they told him he would need a lot of money, a set of galvanizing issues and a tightly run campaign.

"We've been disappointed in Lionel Wilson's arrogance toward the progressive wing of the party, so we were at least going to talk to someone who's interested in running against him," says Bates' political aide Bruce Goddard. "But we told Riles it was going to be heavy—a civil war—and he better get his money, organization and issues in place before he announced."

To Riles and many around him, running against Wilson had more urgency. "By 1989 a lot of big development projects will be decided on, and right now we're just giving things away," Riles said. "In four years the forces behind the mayor will be ready to put money behind a new candidate—it's not going to be any easier then."

With those lines drawn, Riles announced his candidacy, "and we read about it in the paper," recalls Goddard. That pique was not to be overcome. With the benchmarks they'd set of money and organization still unmet, Bates and Dellums kept their distance, but the campaign got underway. What began as an exploratory committee metamorphosed into a campaign organization—even though some involved had become convinced by their explorations that Riles' candidacy was ill-timed.

Dellums aide Sandre Swanson, who chaired the committee, found himself in that bind. "When it was clear the mayor would run again, that slowed people down," Swanson said. "What do you do if you

Wilson Riles Jr.

look at your timetable, and you haven't made your goals for money, or for laying out the issues? If you're really evaluating the situation, you don't run."

The campaign's fatal flaw has been its inability to sharpen the focus of issues that divide Riles and the mayor. Riles supporters advance a chicken-and-egg argument to explain the lackluster efforts: without the support of the left political establishment, raising money, attracting volunteers and putting together a polished campaign have been difficult. The shortage of experienced campaigners has had another political effect: it left a vacuum that was filled by electoral novices, some of them affiliated with the left sectarian groups that abound in the Bay Area.

At times, the campaign committee resembled a debate club, where people hashed out whether it was politically correct to seek support in the wealthier Oakland hills instead of focusing only on the flatlands; whether fundraisers should court major donors or just seek small sums from working people, whether business owners should be drawn into the campaign. The committee imploded last August, with partisans of both the "pragmatist" and the "ultra-left" factions leaving the campaign.

But the most intractable problems in the campaign speak directly to the contradictions in black politics today, contradictions made apparent by Jesse Jackson's campaign. It seems fitting that Jackson turned out to be a player in the Riles/Wilson political chaos. Riles ran Jackson's northern California effort in last June's primary, while Wilson was an early Walter Mondale supporter.

Distracted by his Jackson campaign duties, Riles' own effort flagged—it was in this period that many of the ideological problems festered. He also managed to clash with influential black ministers over the way Jackson's city effort should be run. And in the end, he was unable to win an endorsement from Jackson when Jackson visited Oakland last November. Proclaiming his neutrality in the mayoral race, Jackson attended a breakfast hosted by Mayor Wilson to help defray his presidential campaign debt. Understandably upset at the perceived betrayal, Riles blasted Jackson to the press.

The conflict illuminates Riles' biggest political obstacle—he is not a black politician mounting an "empowerment" campaign against a white incumbent, but a black leftist opposing a not-unpopular moderate black mayor. "This is a cutting-edge election," he said. "It's testing the political maturity of the black community, which has to understand that it's not enough to have a black face in the mayor's office doing what a white politician would be doing."

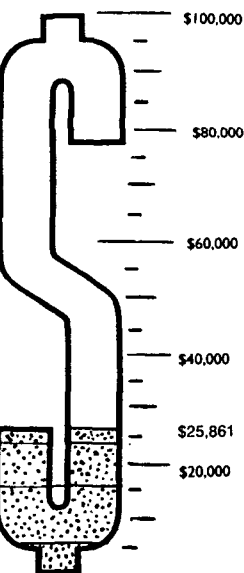
THE STORY INSIDERY

But many fault Riles' campaign for not making clear what the mayor should be doing. "The question has always been, how do you communicate to the black community what the campaign is about, why Wilson Riles is better than Lionel Wilson?" Swanson says.

Still, Dellums' decision not to endorse was a difficult one. He was admittedly balancing his credibility in the black community, where Wilson is on balance respected, with his left base. His executive committee recommended against an endorsement in January, then reversed itself this month and voted for an endorsement by one vote. Riles described himself as "stunned" by Dellums' decision; others denounce it as political timidity, an unwillingness to associate himself with a losing effort.

"Any reasonable person knows that we have supported *prima facie* losing campaigns all over the district—we have a reputation for it," says Dellums' aide Don Hopkins.

In the long run, even Riles supporters worry about how a losing campaign will affect the credibility of the left in Oakland. The Oakland Progressive Political Alliance, which endorsed Riles, ran a spirited campaign behind council candidate Cassie Lopez in North Oakland in 1983 and garnered more than 40 percent of the vote. But OPAA was unable to field council candidates in this election, judging its support too weak in the contested districts. Taking that into account, why would anyone choose to run a citywide left campaign this year?



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The case against "Star Wars"

By John Pike

WASHINGTON

AS THE AMERICAN-SOVIET ARMS talks unfold in the coming weeks in Geneva, President Reagan's "Star Wars" defense plan promises to occupy center stage. The Soviets have made it clear that progress on reductions of offensive forces hinges on limitation on space weapons.

On March 23, 1983, Reagan delivered his now-famous Star Wars speech, in which he called for the development of an anti-ballistic missile (ABM) to defend the American population from Soviet missiles. This program, now known as the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), will support a decision in the early 1990s on whether to proceed with deployment.

The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty faces increasingly severe challenges in the '80s. President Reagan's Star Wars speech was a catalytic event, but several other forces were at work as well. The emerging anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon competition, if continued unchecked, will increasingly pose challenges to the ABM Treaty regime.

The administration's present approach is to insist loudly on strict Soviet compliance with the treaty, while strenuously avoiding resolution of matters that might impinge upon U.S. programs. The "New Strategic Concept" that is the basis of the American position in the resumed arms control negotiations contains a clear formulation of this schizophrenic double standard.

This remarkable doctrine asserts that: "For the next 10 years, we should seek a radical reduction in the number and power of existing and planned offensive and defensive nuclear arms, whether land-based, space-based or otherwise." This would seek to impose the maximum possible restraint on "existing" Soviet BMD and related "defensive nuclear arms," which are "land-based," while placing no restraints on future American "effective non-nuclear defensive forces."

Although the distinction between good non-nuclear defenses and bad nuclear defenses may seem clear to some of the administration, the Soviets may have a slightly different view of the matter. At best, the "New Strategic Concept" is a formula for immediate paralysis at the arms talks in Geneva. And if it continues to form the basis of American policy, it is likely to prove a prescription for encouraging the collapse of the ABM Treaty.

Does the emperor have any clothes?

Technical Feasibility—Will it work? No defense will be 100 percent effective. Since the Soviets have tens of thousands of warheads, even a 99.44 percent perfect defense would be worthless in defending cities. Not only are proposed weapons such as lasers far in the future, but they also are vulnerable to a variety of counter measures.

What is it good for? When the president announced his plan, it was portrayed as a means of protecting the American people from nuclear attack. But this is generally regarded as requiring a level of perfection that is not likely to be achieved. Some advocates, including the president himself, now say that the SDI is for the defense of missile silos. But the Scowcroft Commission has already closed the "window of vulnerability." And over the years, the strategic disadvantages of such deployments have been regarded as outweighing any possible military benefits.

Risk of war. The Star Wars defense will be vulnerable to direct attack, including attack by other space weapons. The defensive umbrella will be more effective in reducing the effects of a retaliatory drizzle than a

torrential first strike. This increases incentives to strike first in a time of crisis. The short reaction times of these systems increase the risk of accidental war.

Arms race or arms control. Defenses can be overwhelmed by a massive increase in the number of attacking weapons. These offensive arms will be cheaper than the weapons needed to defend against them. Star Wars will fuel the offensive arms race and make negotiated limitations on these weapons impossible.

Allied Security. Star Wars will not protect Europe, Japan or other U.S. allies. These countries, because of their proximity to the Soviet Union, are much more difficult to defend than North America. Continuation of the SDI program will reduce the strength and undermine the solidarity of NATO.

Cost. Although the cost of a defense that emphasized national security could perhaps be rationalized, the case against Star Wars is so compelling that any additional spending in this area is difficult to justify. The SDI is frequently referred to as a \$26 billion, five-year program. But this cost and time frame is a product of the Defense Department budget process, which projects only five years into the future. With the new FY 1986 budget request, which gives funding figures through 1990, the SDI is now a six-year, \$33 billion program. The initial development phase of the SDI will run through 1993, at a cost of about \$70 billion. The SDI is intended to support a deployment decision in the 1993 time frame, as part of the New Strategic Concept that is the basis of the administration's current arms control policy.

The estimate of \$70 billion and 10 years assumes that the SDI program proceeds according to the present plan. But such an assumption is difficult to justify on the basis of historical experience, since defense development projects typically take one-third longer and cost one-third more than is initially estimated. This means that the SDI could possibly become a 13-year, \$100 billion effort.

Star warriors strike back.

Despite the formidable problems, some Star Wars advocates say that there are other reasons for continuing with the program. These arguments are of questionable merit, however.

Isn't Star Wars just a research program? Star Wars is far more than a simple research program. The Strategic Defense Initiative is a development program designed to develop and test the hardware needed to begin deployment of an anti-missile system in the mid-'90s. But it will soon violate the ABM Treaty, and its massive budget will create pressures for its deployment. It will also lead to near-term Soviet reactions, most of all in the form of increased levels of offensive forces.

Isn't it better to defend Americans than to kill Russians? Star Wars will not protect American lives. The Star Wars speech also called for a major build-up in U.S. nuclear forces, and the administration has admitted that the U.S. would still need these weapons, even after an anti-missile system was deployed.

Aren't the Soviets ahead of the U.S.? Doesn't this country need to catch up? After disposing of the bomber gap and the missile gap, the U.S. now faces an anti-missile gap. The gap is real, but the U.S. is at least a decade ahead of the Soviets in ABM technology. The Soviets are currently deploying a system (as permitted by the ABM Treaty) that matches the American system of the '60s. There have been no new developments in Soviet BMD capabilities that would justify the Star Wars program.

Aren't the Soviets cheating on the ABM Treaty? Some Soviet activities do raise questions of their compliance with the letter of the Treaty, but these issues should be resolved through established diplomatic channels. American violations of the Treaty in Star Wars weakens the U.S.' grounds for complaint. In the absence of the ABM Treaty, the U.S. would have no basis for objection. The military significance of these compliance issues is minimal.

Who is the emperor's tailor?

Reagan and many administration officials have long been ABM advocates. Star Wars is based fundamentally on the view that arms control cannot contribute to U.S. national security and that strategic defense is the alternative to arms control. This policy returns the U.S. to the conditions that prevailed in the '50s—an unconstrained and all-out arms race, arms controls proposals made for propaganda purposes and a Cold War that threatens to heat up at any time.

This point of view finds powerful support in the interests of the companies that will be paid to build Star Wars. Prior to Star Wars, research on strategic defense consumed only a small part of the overall Pentagon research budget. But under the Strategic Defense Initiative, this research will grow to over 15 percent of the total by 1990, with further growth in the next decade. This growth indicates that in the absence of Star Wars, the total military research effort would actually decline over this period. This is also the case with the SDI and strategic forces RDT&E, as well as military space RDT&E and the space-based component of the SDI.

The cause of this is not difficult to see. Most of the large programs that have dominated the defense research budget in recent years are now close to completion: the MX missile, the B-1B bomber and others are now entering production. And there are plans for future programs of similar magnitude.

In the absence of Star Wars, much of the military research establishment, which grew as a result of these previous efforts, would find itself without a project to work on. Star Wars fills this void. Thus it is not surprising that the major Star Wars contractors include many of the usual suspects, such as Lockheed, Boeing and Hughes. In recent weeks several contractors have enriched the coffers of Star Wars' leading public advocacy group, the High Frontier organization, to the tune of \$1 million.

Star Wars' further attraction is that there is no immediate danger that the system will actually be deployed. Therefore, this research can continue for some time to come.

But by the mid-'90s, there will be a precipitous decline in SDI funding, unless a system is actually deployed. The political difficulties posed by termination of the B-1B bomber program suggest that similar pressures may arise with respect to a future decision on missile defense.

For the contractors who will reap the benefits of the Strategic Defense Initiative, Star Wars is in essence a jobs program. For the American people, who will foot the bill, the question is whether this is the best jobs program that can be devised. It is clear that the Star Wars system would not only fail to protect the American people, but also would fuel the offensive arms race and doom negotiated arms control.

John Pike is associate director for space policy at the Federation of American Scientists. He is the author of several articles and studies on space and national security policy.



Miles DeCoster

INSHORT

Beth Maschinot

Shades of ignorance

The recent reports on human rights abuses by the *contras* in Nicaragua has left the Reagan administration yelling, "what's the big deal, anyway?" One State Department official, when asked about the testimony submitted by New York lawyer Reed Brody, which documents 28 incidences of rape, mutilations and murder, took the pragmatic approach: "You can't have a foreign policy initiative without glitches and problems."

The Americas Watch report and the report initiated by Brody and double-checked by a team of lawyers supported by the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) both make a larger claim, of course: the violence to civilians is not an aberration but often the goal of Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN) troops that are "large enough to warrant a command structure," according to the WOLA report. The WOLA findings also condemn the U.S. policy of "intentional ignorance." Said one State Department official to the investigators from WOLA: "We have no firm knowledge of what's going on in the field." They said that they had not been "tasked" to find out.

But while the State Department stewes over whether the abuses are not in their purview or just inconsequential, the FDN's man in Washington is shooting a little straighter. After calling the reports a "mockery," he added that their hundreds of pages of documentation of brutality "reads like a comic book."

White Paper salvo

Speaking of comic books, the Defense Department's upcoming White Paper has been making the rounds in Washington in a tentative form to see how much dead weight should be excised. CISPES—the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador—received an honorable mention from the DOD as an aider and abettor of the "leftist insurgents" in El Salvador. Besides being one of the "propaganda outlets" for the guerrillas in the U.S., according to the White Paper, CISPES has had a more immediate role in guerrilla operations. A CISPES fund-raising campaign to build a shoe factory in Tequeque, El Salvador, led the donors to believe "they were helping to bring jobs and prosperity to the peasants of the region." In fact, says the report, "the town is in an isolated guerrilla-held area and the insurgents would be the main recipients of the boots. Thus, gifts given as sincere help to the peasants of El Salvador would contribute to the guerrilla war effort."

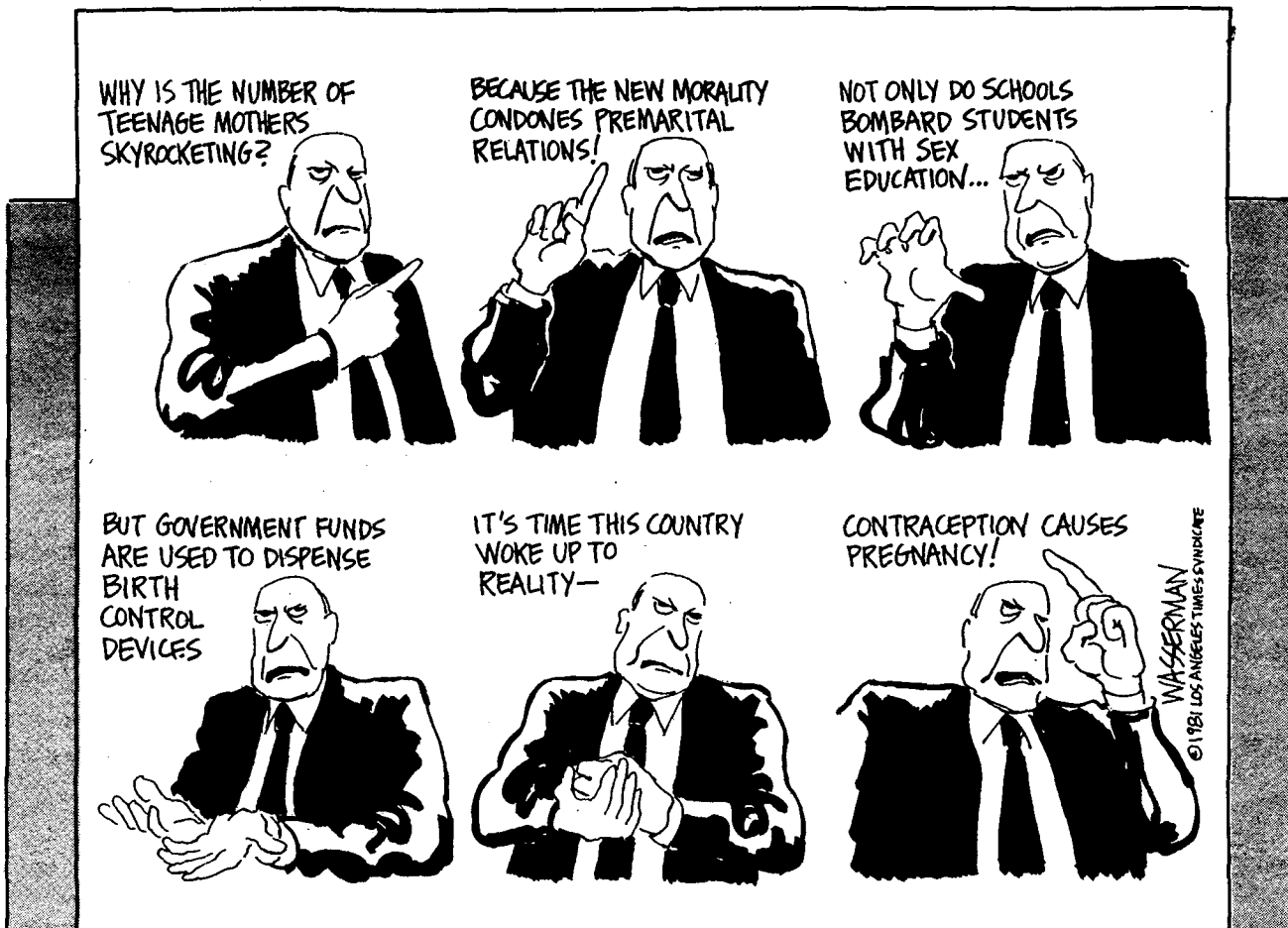
Collision course

When two Burlington Northern freight trains collided near Motley, Minn., last June, killing three workers, BN management fired the dispatcher and claimed that the three workers had been drinking on the job. Initial test results had shown high alcohol levels in the workers' blood. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) chief John Riley called the tests "sad but timely" because they underscored the need to "weed out individuals who have a problem before they become a problem." BN reacted quickly, sending "sniffer dogs" into the railroad yards to ferret out the drinkers.

But a preliminary report leaked earlier this year by the FRA is now giving Burlington Northern problems. The report concludes that the alcohol found in the blood samples of the dead men was "the product of microbe growth resulting from fermentation" and not evidence that they were drinking. The report also affirmed what irate Burlington workers have been saying all along: that BN training procedures for dispatchers were inadequate at the time of the Motley accident. The dispatcher involved, Joe Ceasar, was on the second day of unsupervised dispatching after two weeks of training. Dispatchers now receive four weeks of training.

Brotherhood of Airlines and Rail Clerks Local 1310 President Cindi Burke said that BN's rush to blame the workers was a loud attempt to "cover up management negligence." Burke and a 15-year switchman said last October that BN endangered railroad safety when they instituted a massive job cut a few years ago and failed to modernize tracks and equipment. According to the union, BN was "cold-bloodedly putting money over safety." And the preliminary report supports that charge, Burke says.

The report was written by an FRA regional inspector in Chicago. It now has to be reviewed by FRA's legal and technical staff in Washington and then approved by Riley before it is officially made public. The union,



Planned Parenthood reports that 96 of 1,000 teenage girls in the U.S. have planned and unplanned pregnancies, while the rate is much lower in most other developed countries. The lower figures in other countries—14 per 1,000 in the Netherlands, 35 per 1,000 in Switzerland and 44 per 1,000 in France, Canada and England—reflect a more open communication about sex and greater availability of contraception, the report says. The rate of sexual activity in the six countries was about the same.

Grenada received more than 100,000 refugees in 1984, mostly from the Caribbean.

vented a lot of red faces in Washington. The report also said that many of the disappeared were victims of "terrorist" groups, built let alone the rightist (but Honduran), which in the past have operated clandestinely in national territory. Singled out were the FDN groups, now were accused of kidnapping, torturing and murdering people suspected of being Communist sympathizers in Honduras.

area because it was flying an "unknown type" of flag. According to the report, "The company commander considered using preparation fires to soften what he believed to be a possible Cuban stronghold. This consideration was reversed and prep fires were not used. This decision not to precede the attack with preparation fires was sound, because, as it turned out, Fort Adolphus was the Venezuelan Embassy."

A Honduran military commission set up last year to investigate the disappearance of 112 people, made its official report late last month. The commission accounted

claimed that they were "illegal aliens" who had been captured by the military. The report also said that many of the disappeared were victims of "terrorist" groups, built let alone the rightist (but Honduran), which in the past have operated clandestinely in national territory. Singled out were the FDN groups, now were accused of kidnapping, torturing and murdering people suspected of being Communist sympathizers in Honduras.

The death penalty is now favored by more than 70 percent of Americans, says a recent Gallup poll—the highest level of support since polling on the subject began in 1936.

Berkeley, Calif., has been declared a sanctuary for undocumented Central Americans by the city council. The Berkeley police and other city employees have been directed not to cooperate with the INS as they track down refugees.

The U.S. Department of Energy has had some loud resistance for their proposal to create a national

uranium. But while many residents of a small Washington town were up in arms, the National Christian Nuclear Fellowship had a more fundamental view of the issue. "Plutonium is one of God's creations," said spokesman Greg Morgan, arguing that radioactive material occurs naturally in uranium and that nuclear fission had even occurred in western African rock formations. Finding a place to store the fuel, then, is "consistent with God's admonition that man serve as a wise steward of the world's natural resources."

though hopeful for a public vindication, is still concerned about BN's lack of regard for workers' safety. "Less than a year after the Motley incident, management tried to cut dispatchers' jobs again," said Burke—a move that the dispatchers prevented, at least for now.

Underwater Cold War

The Cold War has sunk to new depths in the past few months. According to *Science* magazine, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has run up against a formidable opponent in their attempt to chart the new U.S. territory acquired when Ronald Reagan extended the nation's boundaries to 200 miles offshore. When Reagan created the "economic exclusion" zone in 1982, industrialists and academic scientists were agog at the possibilities for mineral prospecting, fishing and geological research. The NOAA quickly drew up an ambitious plan to conduct a topographical survey of the ocean floor using the newest Sea-beam technology that would reproduce every nook and cranny on the ocean floor.

Enter the heavies. The Department of Defense, the Navy and the Defense Mapping Agency have locked horns with the civilian agency, objecting that the charting information should remain classified for "national security interests." Presumably, the military is worried that "the enemy" will use the information as a blueprint for stationing their subs. Balderdash, or words to that effect, says William Nierenberg of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and a long-time Defense Department advisor: "It's inconceivable that a submarine would hide there" rather than in mid-ocean.

So far the Defense Department has not backed down.

They've also added a wrinkle to keep the oceanographers frustrated: they've kept their objections to the survey classified as well. And, shall we say, somewhat difficult to respond to.

Moonist expansionism

Sun Myung Moon's anti-Communist group, Causa, infiltrated Paris last month to ponder the threat of "Soviet expansionism in the Caribbean" and the resultant weakening of Europe. At the "International Security Council" meeting, an array of retired generals from the U.S., West Germany, Korea, Chile, Japan and other "Western" countries stressed that the U.S. was going to have to withdraw troops from Europe to defend its southern borders, so Europe would have to build up its own anti-Communist forces and spirit. Retired Gen. Heinz von Zuer Gathen emphasized the need to "change European public opinion." Practical suggestions included organizing seminars on terrorism and getting everybody to read Jean-Francois Revel's latest Cold War revivalist tract, *Comment les democracies finissent* ("how democracies come to an end"). To show their moderation, the International Security Council militants let it be known they had unanimously rejected a suggestion made in private session to assassinate Fidel Castro.

Founded by Moon in 1980 with former South Korea CIA Chief Bo Hi Pak as its director, Causa has been particularly active in Uruguay.

This weeks contributors: Jon Riskind and Diana Johnstone

By Alex Charns

GREENSBORO, NC

HAD IT BEEN THE V.F.W. [Veterans of Foreign Wars] and the VVAW [Vietnam Veterans Against the War] in the '70s, they [the police] would have been on the spot," said Elizabeth Wheaton. She is under contract with Viking for a book on the Nov. 3, 1979, Greensboro killings of five Communists by Klansmen and Nazis. Instead of being on the spot, police were nowhere in sight when an armed car caravan of about 30 Ku Klux Klan and American Nazis drove into a predominantly black neighborhood where the Communist Workers Party (CWP) was holding a "Death to the Klan" rally, which white supremacists had been publicly challenged to attend.

After state and federal criminal trials in 1980 and 1984 that resulted in not-guilty verdicts for the Klansmen and Nazis by all-white juries, the case is back in a new form—a \$48 million civil rights suit with 60 defendants.

This lawsuit is different from the previous two criminal trials because it is a civil suit where the plaintiffs are asking for monetary damages. It is also the first time that the police and federal judges have been named as defendants. The suit alleges that Klan and Nazi members, along with police officers and individual FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) agents, conspired to violate the constitutional rights of anti-Klan demonstrators. The police and federal agents also allegedly failed to protect marchers and attempted to cover up their prior knowledge of the impending violence and own involvement. The defendants include two FBI agents, 36 current or former Greensboro police officers and city officials, two BATF agents and 20 North Carolina Klan and Nazi members, some of whom are no longer active in their groups.

This disclosure by *In These Times* of a police informant in the CWP (see accompanying story) is just one more twist in the bizarre history of the case. The following are already known from previous trials, press reports and pre-trial discovery.

•Bernard Butkovich, a BATF undercover agent, infiltrated the Nazis five months prior to the rally to investigate alle-



Klan rally in Raleigh, N.C.
The robed man on far left is a defendant in the upcoming civil suit.

Chrystal Guy

CWP's civil suit goes to trial

gations that a Nazi member had a sub-machine gun. Butkovich attended a Klan-Nazi meeting on Nov. 1, 1979, where plans were made to go to the anti-Klan rally to throw eggs and heckle. Klansman Jerry Paul Smith stated at that meeting that he had made and tested pipe bombs that "would work good thrown in a crowd of niggers." Butkovich did not attend the rally or warn local authorities because he said there were no plans to bring guns. He is a defendant in the suit.

•Edward Dawson, who was an FBI informant from 1969 to 1976, was being paid by the Greensboro police to inform on the Klan prior to the rally, and had warned his former FBI control agent about the possibility of bloodshed prior to the killings. Dawson also rode in the lead car of the Klan-Nazi caravan that drove to the rally site after warning his police contact that Klansmen were armed. He is also a defendant in the lawsuit. Dawson didn't testify in either of the previous trials.

•Joe Grady, a Winston-Salem Klansman, warned the FBI about the possibility of violence prior to the shootings. He later informed on the Nazis for the BATF.

•A pre-November 3 CWP "directive" concerning their anti-Klan campaign states: "We must push forward military training. The main danger now is hurting ourselves....everyone must practice a minimum of three times by September 1 and after that at least once every six months."

•Three FBI agents met with U.S. attorney H.M. Michaux Jr. a few days before the killings and discussed possible trouble at the rally because the Klan might seek revenge for a prior confrontation. The FBI was only to keep an eye on the situation, yet allowing the local police to handle it.

•Greensboro police officer April Wise and another officer were ordered by superiors out of the rally area about 15 minutes before the shooting started. At this time the Klan-Nazi caravan was driving toward the area with a police photographer tailing them. Police say their strategy was to keep a low profile so as not to appear to harass the marchers, and they were misled by the CWP about the starting point of the rally.

Writer Elizabeth Wheaton told *In These Times* that she believes "incredible bungling by the Greensboro police" is one reason that uniformed officers were not on the scene. The "military mindset" led officers to "wait for the commanders to call tactical units in," she said. Other factors include the police's failure to listen to their own informants and a "let-them-go-at-each-other attitude. They have a good case against the police for negligence."

According to Wheaton, the BATF was engaged in a "pretty massive undercover operation into the Nazis [and there are] lots of contradictions in what they say." If it were simply a "one-man, one-gun investigation against Nazi Wayne Wodo, why was he [Butkovich] all over the state checking these people out? If Wood had a sub-machine gun, why drop the investigation after November 3? Was Butkovich part of a National Socialist [Nazi] Party of America counterintelligence program?" she asked.

Continued on following page

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Police informant infiltrated the CWP

By Alex Charns

AS JURY SELECTION BEGAN in Winston-Salem, N.C., on March 11, *In These Times* learned that a paid informant became close to Communist Workers Party (CWP) members prior to the Nov. 3, 1979, killings, and later infiltrated the group.

Mary Jo Miller, a 36-year-old black woman, is not identified in court documents and is simply referred to as informant 006. Despite a protective order signed by federal judge Robert R. Merhige Jr., *In These Times* learned of her identity through a confidential source not subject to the order.

More than four months before the killings, Miller was working for the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) as a drug informant. Prior to a July 1979 clash between the Workers Viewpoint Organization (WVO), now the CWP, and the Ku Klux Klan in China Grove, N.C., Miller had advised her supervising agent that out-of-town Communists, along with local blacks, were planning to disrupt a Klan gathering. After the Greensboro killings, Miller, working for the SBI and Greensboro police, infiltrated the CWP.

She was one of the "Greensboro 8" charged with conspiracy to firebomb busi-

nesses in Greensboro after the Klan and Nazis were acquitted of murder charges in state court on Nov. 17, 1980. Along with the others, Miller pleaded guilty to the reduced charge of malicious damage to property in the March 1981 trial.

According to pre-trial depositions, SBI agent Tim Nelson was Miller's control agent in the China Grove area of North Carolina. Then in July 1979 she told Nelson of a plan to disrupt the Klan's showing of the film *Birth of a Nation*. At this time Miller was acquainted with WVO member Nelson Johnson and WVO supporter Willena Cannon. Both Cannon and Johnson were at the "Death to the Klan" rally and are plaintiffs in the civil rights suit.

According to Willena Cannon, who is a plaintiff in the lawsuit, Mary Jo Miller was at the China Grove clash on July 8. Anti-Klan demonstrators wielding pipes and clubs came close to blows with armed Klansmen. No shots were fired but demonstrators captured and burned two Confederate flags. Two months later the Nazis and Klan banded together, forming the United Racist Front, to seek retribution.

Cannon remembered that Miller befriended her and was at all the meetings prior to the China Grove run-in with the Klan. Miller was "very militant at meetings," Cannon said.

Prior to the killings, Agent Nelson told

FBI agent John Vander Gast about the WVO's part in the confrontation between blacks and the Klan at China Grove.

An FBI memo dated Jan. 23, 1980, during the bureau's "Greenkill" investigation, states that North Carolina Gov. James Hunt "...is in the process of formulating a proposal which will task the North Carolina SBI with the responsibility of infiltrating and neutralizing the three groups [CWP, KKK and Nazis]." Another FBI memo from January 1980 states that the bureau had no informant in the CWP but were working on developing sources.

By August 1980, Miller had been relocated to Greensboro by the SBI and was under the control of Mike Robertson, the Greensboro resident agent. During this time Miller was gathering information on the CWP after an alleged threat on Gov. Hunt's life. After moving to Greensboro, the SBI and Greensboro police jointly used Miller to keep tabs on the CWP. The only guidelines set for Miller were: "not to break the law," according to Robertson's deposition.

Although informants are usually paid as they supply relevant information, Miller was salaried at \$200 a week. During her employment, the SBI had no written guidelines on informants, according to SBI depositions.

On the evening of Nov. 17, 1980, after not-guilty verdicts were returned against the Klan and Nazis in the state murder trial, Miller and seven other blacks were arrested on charges of conspiracy to firebomb businesses in Greensboro. Cannon was one of those arrested. She said that earlier that night, she—along with six or seven other people—heard Miller say, "We

Continued on following page

By Greg LeRoy

WASHINGTON

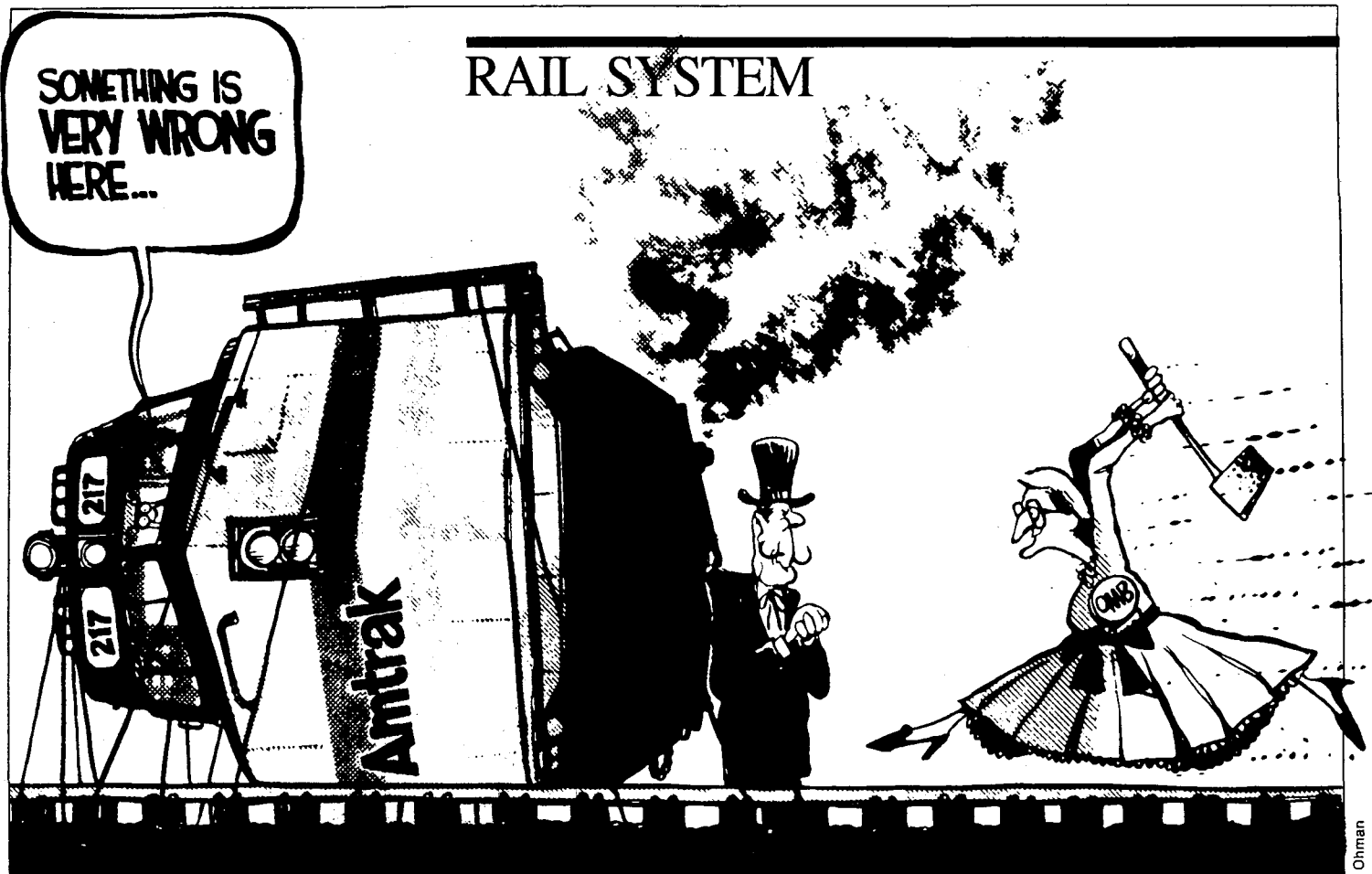
DESPITE ATTACKS FROM PRESIDENT Reagan and other right-wing deficit-cutters, Amtrak cleared its first tressle March 6 when the Senate Budget Committee voted 13-9 to freeze federal transportation funding. With a little help from his friends, the federally supported rail company may hold its own this year against Reagan's demand for zero funding.

Amtrak's next stop is the Senate Commerce Committee, whose chairman, William Danforth (R-MO) recently called Amtrak a "trip down memory lane." While Amtrak supporters believe they can find one Republican to cross over and tip the Commerce vote 9-8, Danforth's vocal opposition and the possibility of line-item floor amendments to the Senate budget leave Amtrak vulnerable to new attacks. Things are just as volatile on the House side.

Amtrak President Graham Claytor has been lobbying Capitol Hill for a freeze or, at most, a 10 percent cut below fiscal 1985's \$684 million. Such a cut would force several states to make up 100 percent of the losses on 403 trains (Amtrak currently makes up half the losses). Cuts could also lead to new Amtrak offensives to reduce the size of train operating crews. Claytor, a Reagan appointee who faced congressional charges of labor abuses last fall (see *In These Times*, Aug. 8 and Sept. 26, 1984), scrambled two weeks ago to delay another hearing by Rep. Cardiss Collins (D-IL), this one concerning theft and fraud by Amtrak managers in Chicago. Claytor is reportedly determined to save as many trains as possible, using the budget cuts to reduce labor instead.

Indeed, with a budget freeze or a small cut, Amtrak will stay mired in a "no-growth" position, unable to improve existing service or tap new markets. That will turn Amtrak's ridership and revenue figures stagnant, making the company more vulnerable to attack next year. If Amtrak were abolished, the U.S. would discard more than \$3 billion in physical plant and equipment assets and take more than 20,000 skilled workers off the taxpayers' rolls.

Lost in all the niggling over freezes and



Idealogues attempt to derail trains

cuts is the broad ideological issue that Amtrak represents: Is the U.S. so backward as to become the only industrialized nation without a passenger rail system? In his State of the Union address, Reagan declared, "Taxpayers pay about \$35 per passenger every time an Amtrak train leaves the station." While that is true, he failed to mention that Uncle Sam foregoes \$33 in business expense tax deductions for each airline passenger, not to mention the \$5.3 billion budgeted for the Federal Aviation Administration, or the \$13.25 billion budgeted in fiscal 1985 for highway construction.

Reagan also ignored the fact that Amtrak recovers 58 percent of its costs from re-

venues, up from 48 percent in 1981. Federal aid to Amtrak dropped 26.5 percent between 1981 and 1985; most of Amtrak's hourly workers gave up close to 12 percent in raises over the last three-and-a-half years.

National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) Executive Director Ross Capon says Amtrak gets singled out for statistic-slinging because other modes of transportation are subsidized by "painless" devices (such as the gasoline tax and the airline ticket tax) that Congress doesn't have to vote on each year. Capon said NARP would like to see three-fourths of a cent of the gasoline tax, or about \$750 mil-

lion a year, permanently allocated to Amtrak so the company can schedule its next wave of capital improvements and route expansion, knowing the money will be there. The havoc of going through a budget fight every year impedes Amtrak's ability to plan and build.

Back in the summer of 1981, when the word got out about Amtrak's plush new double-deck Superliners, reservation agents had to say, "Sorry, all booked up" to 400,000 callers *per month* for just the three trains between Chicago and the West Coast. NARP and other pro-rail groups cite this and other episodes as proof that Amtrak doesn't need austerity—it needs more equipment to meet peak demand and maximize its revenues.

Despite the need for improved Amtrak service, the congressional push to reduce the deficit means no easy road ahead toward even a funding freeze.

Greg LeRoy is chairman of District 2501 of the Amtrak Division of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks.

Trial

Continued from preceding page

The case is going to be a tough one to win due to the plaintiffs' political beliefs. Carolyn McAllister, one of the plaintiffs' lawyers, recognizes the legal and emotional problems posed by her clients' militant brand of Communism and their open challenges to the Klan to appear at the rally.

THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF ISRAEL—WHICH WAY FORWARD?

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Also, pre-rally CWP documents concerning their anti-Klan campaign that encouraged confrontation and included a directive requiring members to train with weapons will help the defendants' argument that they were defending themselves.

"It's easy for people to say, 'They're Communists and they asked for it,'" McAllister told *In These Times*.

That's exactly what the defendants are going to argue, said Larry I. Moore III, who was appointed by the court to assist Klan and Nazi defendants too poor to afford a lawyer. He said his clients are contending that the CWP planned the rally as part of a conspiracy to lure Klan members to the site of the march so CWP members could initiate a violent confrontation to gain favorable publicity. "They [CWP] were prepared to do some serious fighting," Moore said.

New cloak-and-dagger stories have emerged from the lawsuit itself. CWP documents were uncovered in preparation for the lawsuit by the use of "trash covers." The police rummaged through trash at the residences of CWP members and at the

Greensboro Civil Rights Fund.

Also, CWP leader Nelson Johnson's briefcase full of CWP documents disappeared in 1980 and reappeared eventually at the Greensboro police station. Before the briefcase was returned the police copied all of the enclosed documents. Judge Merhige ruled there was no proof that the briefcase was stolen by the informant Mary Jo Miller, as the plaintiffs had argued, and there was no basis under the Fourth Amendment to suppress its contents.

"It's outrageous that this activity is allowed to continue when it is the very substance of our suit," said Dr. Martha Nathan, whose husband was killed at the rally.

As jury selection began March 4, Judge Merhige was still considering the plaintiffs' motion to move the trial to Richmond, Va., in order to find an unbiased, racially balanced jury. The trial is expected to last until July. Since government documents were withheld from the plaintiffs on national security and other grounds, many unanswered questions remain. But it is unlikely that the complete story will be known by the time this jury, the third one to hear the case, returns its verdict.

Miller

Continued from preceding page

should let Greensboro burn; then we'll show those bastards."

"Her thing was revenge," said Cannon. Even after the Greensboro 8 arrests, Cannon said, Miller still insisted that people "hit white places in the black community."

During his deposition, Robertson was asked if one of his informants was indicted on attempted firebombing charges, would he still use the informant. He said that he would continue if the informant was simply

gathering information and not a motivator.

On March 17, 1981, Cannon, Miller and the rest of the Greensboro 8, as part of an agreement with the state, pleaded guilty to the reduced charge of misdemeanor malicious damage to property. All were given a six-month suspended sentence. As late as March 1981, the SBI was still paying part of Miller's salary.

The Greensboro police records on Miller are under protective order, and Fred Hamlet, one of Greensboro's lawyers in the lawsuit, failed to return a phone call about Miller's status.

Greensboro police attorney M.A. Cawn, who has held that job since before the shootings, said that he had never heard of Mary Jo Miller. Cawn is also a defendant in the lawsuit. According to Cawn, his job is in the "administrative end of things."

Cannon said that Miller was approached about CWP membership in the months following her arrest, but they withdrew the offer when other members became distrustful of her following the arson arrest. Cannon says that some of Miller's friends apparently believed Miller was a CWP member. She often sold the CWP newspaper *Workers' Viewpoint* and attended CWP-sponsored rallies and programs. She would "pass out leaflets and talk with people about the struggle and gave the strong impression of being [a CWP member]."

This year Miller was charged with mortgage fraud by Avco Financial Services of Greensboro, according to a courthouse clerk's record check. Avco's Paul Steel said that he was told by a Greensboro assistant district attorney that the case had to be put off for a while because Miller "was into something—something she was doing for them." According to Steel, "Everyone was hush-hush [about it]."

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By Mike Dennison

AGRICULTURE

The grain shippers' role in the farm crisis

AS THE EMOTIONAL DEBATE over the plight of American farmers began to make national news early this year, a grain-shipping firm called Cargill Inc. dropped a bombshell it knew would make headlines: it was planning to import 25,000 tons of Argentine wheat into the U.S.

Buying from the Argentines had become "economically feasible," the company said, because U.S. grain was too high-priced in comparison to foreign markets. Government price supports and the strong U.S. dollar were to blame, Cargill said. The underlying message was clear: if American farmers want their goods to compete on the world market, maybe it was time to wean themselves from artificial price supports and accept the prevailing market price.

Hard-pressed farmers across the grain belt of America reacted to Cargill's comments with bitter, frustrated anger. Why should they accept even less money for their commodities when they couldn't even pay their bills at the price they were getting now? they asked.

But several days after the Argentine grain shipment was announced, Cargill called off the deal. The company said it killed it in the face of adverse public reaction. Most farm leaders believe the shipment never existed, and was nothing more than a publicity stunt to lobby for cuts in government price supports.

"I don't think there's any doubt that it was an effort to get Congress to lower U.S. support prices," says Terry Murphy, president of the Montana Farmers Union.

Reagan's veto two weeks ago of the emergency farm credit bill was a first step, to be followed by the push for lowered price supports, in his campaign for a "market-oriented" farm policy. In justifying his veto, Reagan characteristically lied. Although he claimed that "at best" only 4 percent of farmers need immediate help, a recent Department of Agriculture study reported that 6.3 percent of farmers are technically insolvent and another 7.4 percent are on the verge of insolvency. It also concluded that one-third of all family-sized commercial farms would face financial difficulty this year.

Reagan likewise exaggerated the cost of the program, which would have provided useful but ultimately inadequate aid to string along farmers' credit. Although he claimed a cost of \$2.5 billion over several years, the vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City and Washington agriculture consultant John A. Schnittker both put the figure at \$400 million, somewhat higher than the Democratic legislators' estimate of \$250 million.

Reagan's "market-oriented" farm policy will mean lower farm prices, a large number of farm failures, bank collapses, depression in farm-related businesses and widespread rural and small-town hardship. In all likelihood, it will not bring noticeable price reductions for consumers. The greatest beneficiaries will be those involved in trading agricultural commodities, companies like Cargill and the other big grain dealers.

Whatever Cargill's motive, the "Argentine deal" and its accompanying publicity were uncharacteristic moves into the limelight by a largely ignored segment of America's agriculture economy: the grain shippers.

The shipping firms are the middlemen in the domestic and international grain trade, a multibillion-dollar business with customers in virtually every country in the world. While farmers are locked into selling their grain to shipping firms at the going rate, the shippers are free to seek out customers worldwide and haggle prices. When news reports tell of the latest sale of U.S. grain to the Soviet Union, it is the international shippers who carry out the transaction and take the Russians' money. Shippers often take enormous financial risks, too. In arranging huge contracts with buyers, shippers sometimes gamble they will be able to acquire enough grain to fill

the contract at a profitable price.

It's hard to imagine a national debate on energy or oil without frequent mention of such corporate giants as Gulf or Exxon. Yet that is what has occurred in the debate on the nation's "farm crisis," with names like Cargill, Continental and Bunge seldom mentioned and scarcely recognized as having a critical stake in and likely influence over U.S. agriculture policy.

The grain trade has always been a business that holds its cards close to its chest. The world's five largest shippers—Cargill, Continental, Louis Dreyfus, Bunge and Andre—are privately owned and do not reveal their earnings. They shun publicity and usually avoid the scrutiny of news coverage. From 1980-83, the years of the Russian grain embargo and the beginning of the worst farm crisis since the Depression, the *New York Times* carried only two news stories focusing on Cargill Inc.—a company that handles about 25 percent of America's mammoth grain exports and that has 140 subsidiaries in 36 countries.

Because of that tradition of secrecy and low profiles, Cargill's louder-than-usual public statements this year on U.S. farm policy seem out of character. Were Cargill and other large shippers finally beginning to feel the crunch in the agriculture economy? some asked.

A Cargill spokesman would not say whether business was declining, but Daryl Natz of the Continental Grain Co. conceded the shippers' business generally follows the trend of the U.S. export markets. Harvest and export figures indicate that while farmers suffered through the early '80s recession with its falling commodities prices and murderous interest rates, shippers who sold overseas did a brisk business. Grain shippers make their money on volume sales, and the 1981-82 harvest year was the largest volume year for U.S. agriculture exports in history. The 1984-85 harvest is expected to be the second largest volume year for U.S. exports.

"It really doesn't matter whether they [the shippers] buy grain for \$3 a bushel or \$5 a bushel, they still get their margin," said Jim Christianson, executive vice pres-

ident of Montana's state Wheat Research and Marketing Committee. But U.S. exports have been declining since 1982, and the U.S. dollar has remained relentlessly strong, reducing the American share of world grain markets. Shipments from the U.S. are bought and sold with American dollars, and as foreign buyers are forced to spend ever higher amounts of their own currency to buy the same amount of U.S. grain, they begin to look to other, more inexpensive markets. Shippers who buy most of their grain in the U.S. and the farmers who sell to them are the losers.

In response to this downward trend, Cargill and other shippers have begun lobbying for a gradual phase-out of government price supports and conversion to a "market-oriented" program. They concede that such a program would mean lower prices paid to farmers, but maintain that it will eventually lead to increased demand for U.S. products and an expansion of U.S. farmers' share of the world grain market.

A fall in commodity prices on the world market might mean a greater share of the export market for U.S. producers, but farmers already having trouble meeting production costs at today's prices—25 to 40 percent of them—would be threatened with

bankruptcy. The land they lose, however, most likely would be bought by larger, more financially secure farming entities that would continue to make the land produce. So the shippers would still have their suppliers.

"That's what Cargill has been accused of encouraging," said Christianson. "But that's the most cynical view."

Devon Woodland, president of the National Farmers Organization, puts it more bluntly: "Cargill makes profits off of volume movement. They're not concerned about the American farmer or the American economy. People just aren't important to them."

In answer to this criticism, Cargill, Continental and other large shippers also advocate some type of assistance program for farmers to cushion the blow of the conversion to lower "market-oriented" prices. But as one Montana farmer pointed out, "We don't need any more borrowed money—we need a better price for our product."

The shippers have an ally in the Reagan administration, which also touts a "market-oriented" farm policy. Also, the highest-ranking government official on farm export policy, Agriculture Undersecretary Daniel Amstutz, is a former career executive with Cargill.

In terms of price supports, the administration has proposed pretty much what the shippers have suggested. The 1986 Reagan budget calls for a 5 percent reduction in loan prices, which generally set the world floor price of commodities. The "loan price" is the level at which farmers value their grain when it is put up for collateral to acquire government loans. If they cannot pay back the loans in cash, they pay it off in grain valued at the loan price. Those grain "pay-offs" are what make up government-owned surpluses.

Amstutz is fond of pointing out how world commodity prices recently have begun to fall well below the loan price, thus undercutting U.S. products on the world market. But what he fails to note is that major grain exporters like Argentina and Brazil have been virtually forced to cut their prices to raise money so that they can pay off their staggering foreign debts. If U.S. farmers were to enter into an international commodities price war with countries such as these, the economies of both would suffer.

Whatever direction the debate on U.S. farm policy takes, the terms "free market" and "market-oriented" are sure to be repeated again and again, by the shippers, the Reagan administration and even some farmers. But as Murphy and other farm leaders will tell you, the term "free market" is a misnomer when applied to the international grain trade, which is subject to a maze of tariffs, foreign government subsidies and political maneuvering.

"Each time our government has placed an embargo on U.S. grain since 1974, the effect is to knock prices here at home right into the basement," Murphy says. "Any U.S. president has the power to [enforce an embargo]. That will never change. So we should be able to expect the government to set a bottom price."

Mike Dennison is a Montana-based reporter who writes often on agricultural issues.



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Marc Pokempner

RUST BELT

Over the coming year In These Times will publish occasional articles on "the rust belt." They will report and analyze the decline of industry in the nation's traditional manufacturing heartland, its causes and likely future courses, political and policy responses, its effect on the region's people and institutions and its significance for the nation as a whole. The research has been funded by a grant from the Aidlin Foundation and by matching contributions from other donors.

By David Moberg

CICERO, IL

IT WAS ONE OF THE COLDEST SUNDAY mornings in Chicago-area history, a time when it's a miracle any car engine turns over. But the small Steelworkers union hall in a gritty, solidly industrial section of this old blue-collar suburb was packed with men—and a few women—still wearing their heavy coats. These were the truly committed, the people who had been on the picket line day after day for the past nine months, who had encouraged fellow strikers worried about bills or depressed about the strike's prospects to persevere, who had consistently turned down settlements that would not bring back to work all their striking union brothers. Yet slowly their numbers had slipped, as one union member after another, joining a force of newly hired strikebreakers, walked through their picket line to take jobs in the

cavernous sheds where they build for Danly Machine Corporation huge metal-forming presses and dies destined primarily for the automobile industry.

It was a sober gathering with an undercurrent of anger, aimed as much at the "scabs" as at the company. There was also a sense of pride in the strike mixed with bitterness at its limited successes. After some discussion, 51-year-old Dan Zielinski stood up. A brown fur hat still perched on his head, cigar at the ready, Zielinski was a skilled electrician who had worked at Danly for 27 years and a strong union supporter.

"I've heard people talking about trusting the company," he started. "Trust means nothing. We can't even trust our own people. Some people voted 'no' [on the last contract offer] and then went in there. It's time to admit to ourselves—the strike is over. We've just got to get our own people in. We talk about guarantees. We can't even guarantee what we're going to do. It's time to get real practical. We wait another week and 20 more go in. Another week and 20 more. How many more top people can go in before they tell us to go to hell? The strike is over. Let's salvage what we can. If your house is hit by a tornado, you don't set fire to the remains because you're ticked off. You salvage what you can and start over. We may surprise ourselves what we can do when we're back in."

There was applause. Just a week earlier a similar meeting had voted down a strike settlement and hooted international union President Lynn Williams and even representative Ed Sadlowski, the militant district leader who had spent many mornings on their picket line. Two days later, on January 22, when strikers had had time to assess some small improvements in that rejected package, they voted to end the strike.

Compared to the beating many unions have taken and to the original demands of the company, Steelworkers Local 15271 managed to eke out some compromise vic-

tories. Compared to their hopes and traditions, they suffered a grave setback. From the beginning many of them saw the central issue in the strike as the very existence of their union. After the long, acrimonious battle, even though some strikers became far more committed unionists, the existence of the union is still in question. Deep divisions among workers could make it harder for the union to win in a forthcoming decertification election.

Like the coal miners in Britain, the Danly workers come from a long tradition of tough-minded, gut-instinct unionism. Joe Romano, union president for the past nine years, is a lean, likeable, inspirational local leader whose father helped organize Danly as a United Electrical workers (UE) local in the '30s. He consistently attracted at least 100 members—out of an active pre-strike workforce of 400, not counting nearly 600 on long-term layoff—to local meetings. Union business was freely and frankly discussed, and Romano brought in speakers about not only union affairs but also issues from South Africa to Central America. He encouraged labor education training of anyone interested, including political opponents.

Like the British miners, Danly workers seemed prime prospects for maintaining union solidarity. Yet pressures from outside—a bleak industrial economy in the Midwest, prolonged depression in the machine tool industry, a political and cultural climate that gives less and less support to the ideals of unionism—helped a newly combative management to chip away at workers' trust in themselves and their union. Eventually, like the miners, it was the slow crumbling of worker solidarity that sapped their strength.

Competitive pressures.

The family-owned Danly Machine Corporation that started in 1922 had long been known for making the "Cadillacs" of auto

industry stamping presses, awe-inspiring machines as much as six stories tall, weighing hundreds of tons, producing 2,000 tons of thrust to bend steel into body shapes, all of it machined and assembled to tolerances of less than one-thousandth of an inch and increasingly controlled by extensive banks of complicated electronics and microcomputers. In 1982 the family sold out to the Ogden Corporation, a New York-based conglomerate with interests in services, manufacturing, construction and other fields.

The next years were hard. An auto industry slump meant that there were few orders for the company's leading products. The new surge of Japanese imports, originally concentrated in less sophisticated products such as lathes, began to compete even in Danly's league. With the rapid and sustained rise in the value of the dollar, European as well as Japanese firms could grab contracts that Danly and other U.S. tool-makers would once have had without question. From a peak employment of 1,350 or more, the rolls dropped as low as 325. Danly lost \$10.3 million in 1982 and 1983.

Just prior to the contract expiration last May 1, Danly began to benefit from the auto recovery. New orders would soon have led to capacity production, and even in the second quarter there was a slight operating profit at Danly. Nevertheless, the union was sensitive to competitive pressures. In a three-month period before the strike, productivity jumped by 33 percent, Danly director of employee relations Gary Lorenz said. The union was prepared to change some work rules that had proven unexpectedly awkward during the time of high layoffs.

"When we were faced with that, we immediately eliminated rules we thought were counterproductive," Romano said. "Having an efficient company is important to the worker, too. They talk about obligation to the stockholder, but they owe something

to someone who has invested their time and work. Labor contracts try to protect the investment. Where's the dividend to me? The company would be more productive if they didn't pay dividends to the stockholders. That's silly, but this is no different."

In the absence of a more direct form of worker control on the shop floor, work rules and seniority rights protect workers' investment of time from arbitrary favoritism by supervisors. Such rules may not always be most efficient. But, Romano argued, even if the workplace of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* was more efficient, efficiency isn't everything. Besides, he said, as the experiments at nearby Westinghouse Corporation showed decades ago, productivity can be boosted as workers get better working conditions, humane treatment and recognition rather than the close monitoring and pressure that has increased at Danly.

The company wanted to freeze wages, eliminate cost-of-living increases in wages and pensions, shift future insurance premium increases to workers, cut time off and drastically revamp work rules and seniority provisions. Danly also wanted to set up two different wage schedules, with all new workers starting at wages several dollars an hour less than the roughly \$12.70 average for Danly. (That is roughly in line with U.S. machine tool average pay, although Danly claims its rates were higher, and comparable to Japanese rates, according to industry experts.)

Eventually the union settled for a two-year wage freeze, a 2.6 percent increase in the third year, restoration at the end of the cost-of-living adjustment in principle, a two-tier wage system that brings new-hires up to regular wages within two to four years, greater management freedom to subcontract work and widespread work rule and seniority changes—the original crux of conflict.

Management provocation.

But the toughest issues of the strike were those that grew out of the conflict itself. As management hired new workers, it insisted that they have super-seniority above that of the veteran strikers, many with 20 or more years of experience. Eighteen strikers were fired for picketline offenses. Some were dubious charges; others involved provocation by the heavy security force, including many off-duty police. Workers demanded their rehiring, rejecting partly on that basis three contracts brought back by international union representatives, including the next-to-last offer that would have paid \$25,000 each to six fired strikers rather than rehiring them.

Not everyone was so loyal. Union members were convinced that the company deliberately provoked the strike as part of a strategy to break the union. Management, they say, boarded up factory windows even before the union rejected its last pre-strike proposal. Throughout the strike workers were bombarded by letters to their homes, an extension of an earlier "employee communications" program established by Lorenz, an experienced anti-union consultant who had joined the company less than a year earlier. Supervisors worked on the weak-willed; in at least one case a strikebreaker invited some friends to his house then surprised them with another guest, a supervisor pleading for them to return. Strikers were told they were being permanently replaced.

Selfishness, the national religion, is a constant threat to union solidarity. One union member called Romano just before the strike, urging a 'no' vote. He was first to cross the picket line. Desperate, jobless workers were tempted to break the strike. "A lot of them came from Gary and South Chicago, the steel mills," plant manager George Biliskov said.

Some laid-off Danly workers also seized the opportunity. Laid off in 1982, Dorothy Houk crossed the picket line "for the money. I don't know what the strike was about, but I'm glad they went on strike. I got my job back." But Arlene Hodges, a black woman who had survived her layoff after seven years at Danly by washing cars, collecting cans, tending bar, pumping gas, running a paper stand and waiting in a soup

line, rejected the company's pleas. "Why should I go back?" she asked. "The union has to stick together. I believe in the union. You need that more than anything."

Others went back as they felt the battle was lost, thus assuring that outcome. After five months, Eugene Mstonski, a 20-year Danly employee, broke ranks. "That strike was useless," he said. "There was nothing to strike for. Originally I thought we had a chance. But after five months, the case was lost. It was a difficult decision to make. How am I going to look in the faces of people before me, they yelling me 'scab'? But I thought I'd never get my job back. I'm 57 years old."

Tony Bitto, an ex-foreman pushed back into production because of layoffs, came in after three months. "I didn't think they were making much headway," he said. "I saw people come in here taking my job after 25 years. Financially I couldn't afford it. I'd been laid off for a year just before this."

But even union officials and brothers of union leaders crossed the line eventually, creating deep divisions. Finally, when Romano saw the union losing some of the very best, most skilled workers—the core whose value to the company gave the union its strength to fight for the less skilled, he decided the strike had to be ended. "If I can't keep 'em out when the feeling is good," he asked, "what about when times are bad? Now it's getting to be key people." By the strike's end, Danly had hired 450 workers, roughly half of them strikers who crossed the picket line. It expects to reach a peak employment of 750-800 later this year.

Romano and other union negotiators eventually converted all firings into suspensions and set up a schedule for return of strikers, 103 at first, most of the rest by May 1 (or else they would receive special payments by the company). But now the company is using stringent medical standards to exclude many strikers. In the plant discipline is harsh; a striker was suspended for verbal abuse while a strikebreaker guilty of the same offense was simply warned.

Although Danly professes neutrality on the decertification election and Lorenz says "a good, strong, intelligent union is good for both parties," the union charges that the man who circulated the decertification petition had free reign throughout the plant, unlike any other employee. That same person, Romano said, had been active on the strike food committee until the union found that he was stealing food from a federal program and illegally charging people for access to another food program. When the union confronted him, he crossed the picket line.

Food assistance, bolstered by contributions from other unions and friendly stores, was simply one of many union tools to maintain solidarity. There were strike benefits as well as special payments for mortgages and other pressing bills (and the international continued to pay urgent bills for those not immediately recalled even after the strike ended). Every Sunday morning there was a union meeting. Until the courts restrained them, the union occasionally mounted mass picket lines at the plant, and there was always at least minimal picketing.

Workers' morale boosted.

But the union also took the offensive against Danly and the Ogden Corporation on other fronts. They contacted unions with pension fund holdings of Ogden stock, leafleted an Ogden-owned concession service at a local outdoor music pavilion during a Willie Nelson concert, leafleted Danly at the big biennial Machine Tool Show (for the first time in 40 years, Danly did not participate), demonstrated outside offices of Danly's public relations firm, picketed Chicago's City Hall (to win, until the police union reversed it, Mayor Harold Washington's order prohibiting police as strike security workers), formed a citizens' support committee and held rallies that brought other unions to their support.

The local was helped by research from the Kamber Group, a public relations firm. Eventually Kamber recommended attack-

ing two Ogden subsidiaries, Ogden Martin Systems and Avondale Shipyards, which was already embarrassed by wide-ranging corruption indictments. Steelworkers joined in testimony that succeeded in holding up Avondale's bid to build a Louisiana hydroelectric facility. There were also plans for protesting bids by Ogden Martin Systems for construction of waste disposal facilities.

Although Kamber's Susan Kellock felt the campaign would have been more effective if it had not started several months into the strike, she argued the campaign boosted morale of strikers, demonstrated Steelworker unity (even though the Danly local had long criticized international leadership) and showed Ogden it was vulnerable on other fronts. Ogden set up a special task force to deal with these attacks, although Lorenz insists bargaining strategy was not affected by them. Romano himself was not convinced the campaign accomplished much.

The local felt hamstrung by the law. The company, after winning an injunction limiting picketing, used television monitors on plant property and, according to strikers, in a rented house across the street to monitor any possible violations. Eventually Romano was sentenced for contempt of court for not preventing picketers from blocking a gate. Unofficially some strikers delivered a message to scabs with bricks through windows and damage to cars. A couple dozen private lawsuits resulted from confrontations on and off the picket line.

The regional office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) issued a complaint against the union for picket line misconduct (although hearings were continually delayed), but the NLRB stalled on investigations of union charges and never issued a complaint. The union charged the company with prolonging the strike by maintaining its illegal position that strikebreakers had seniority preference over strikers, withholding information due the union, interfering with the contract by trying to per-

Union battles to keep troops together in hostile climate.



sue members to quit the union and violating the right to strike by withholding vacation pay due the strikers. If the NLRB had acted promptly, the strike would have become an unfair labor practice strike, which would have guaranteed immediate, preferential hiring of all strikers, thus eliminating a major issue prolonging the strike.

With the economy, the law, the political climate and company tactics working against them, union leaders had a hard time maintaining solidarity. Increasingly some unions are deciding that under such circumstances it is best for workers to stay in the factory and carry on its pressure campaign through tactics such as slowdowns or pressure on corporate weak points, striking only when it is to the advantage of the union, not the company.

Picketline confrontations like those at Danly run the risk of redirecting the focus of the strike. "I hate the scabs," Romano said on the day of the final contract balloting. "We get angrier at the scabs than at the people who created them, which is crazy." Tensions will remain for many years at Danly, he predicted, ultimately hurting production. "It's certainly not going to be kiss and make up," he said. "Some feel they've been out so long because of scabs and crossovers."

Yet a few weeks later Romano was urging loyal union members to suppress hostility toward strikebreakers. "No matter how you feel personally," he pleaded at a Sunday morning meeting, "understand—don't play the bosses' game: scab/striker, black/white/Mexican, men/women. We've got to keep the direction straight." Yet the group's feelings were best captured by a poster on the wall, along with union exhortations and Romano's personal collection of works by blue-collar painter Ralph Fasanella: "I survived Danly's strike. Thank God I'm not a scab."

Romano remained uncertain about what could have been done. "Maybe some more emphasis should be put on traditional methods, a little more physical," he speculated. "People are afraid of legal issues. Every time you turn around, there's another lawyer. Some things you just have to face the consequences and do the action today—just to stop them. If I get arrested for spitting, I might as well do something more forceful. If everything had been done legally, labor unions would never have developed in this country."

Union members act in solidarity, despite the prevailing individualism in our culture, because they see it as a means of gaining improvements, as an expression of unionism, as a value in its own right—like friendship—as an expression of power, and as an alternative to a hierarchical or ultra-competitive way of life. As the strike's strength and chances for victory looked dimmer, much hung on the moral meanings of solidarity.

Solidarity takes on special meaning in a workforce like Danly's where there is a mingling of Polish, Italian, Mexican, southside black, Middle Eastern and many other accents. The newcomers can be as solid as the old. "I don't cross the line," said Hakky Mustafa, who came to the U.S. from Jordan 12 years ago. Despite huge bills for four uninsured hospital visits by his wife during the strike, he held firm, "because when you are union, you have to stick to that. My boss called and said, 'Why not come back to work? No more union. It's finished.' I told him I cross the line with everybody. I would be ashamed to face people I work eight years with. The union is strong, but those people [who cross] make the union weak. You know the union role in the world. You look for your family, your future, your children, for other people who work, not just for yourself. You know the union will be here for a long time. I stay out because I would not want to hear someone call me a scab or my son hear somebody call me a scab."

"The scab is my worst enemy, not Lorenz," Sadlowski said bitterly as the strike was ending. "I can beat him every day. He can't move without our brain and muscle. But that scab not only beats workers, he beats himself in the end. He lowers not only the power of workers in this hall but his own. For that to be different, he's got to change." Some workers did change, Sadlowski said: "It's a solidified union now. There's a class consciousness. It's a worker against the boss thing.... If there were hundreds more like this in the country, the union movement would be different."

Was it worth it? I asked Romano. "You can't evaluate it that simply," he replied. "Sometimes not losing is a gain, instilling something in members is a gain. The gains are immeasurable. I've been here 21 years, and there are guys who never were in the union who came here for the first time, brought their families. People have understood you've got to fight sometimes. You don't always win. Understanding the need for unity is a gain. Was it worth it? Yes."

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

Save your sperm, Nat

IN THESE TIMES' ACCOUNT OF KATHA POLLITT's differences with Nat Hentoff over abortion (*ITT*, Feb. 20) overlooks her major points.

Since it is men who produce the harmful and unwanted pregnancies that result in abortions, the only practical approach is to tackle male irresponsibility instead of simply blaming the victims. Most abortions would not be necessary if sexually active males would accept their moral obligation to protect their partners from problem pregnancies.

Contraceptive techniques generally involve more trouble and health risk to women than to men, but women have been compelled to assume more than their fair share of responsibility in this area. Vasectomies, for example, are much less costly and difficult than tubal ligations, and men need not fear the possible irreversibility of sterilization in case of a change of heart, since they can save their sperm for such eventualities. Women have no such options, but twice as many women as men are undergoing tubal ligations.

There is plenty of missionary work for Nat to do among his brethren without attacking the fairer sex.

Audrey Patton
Minneapolis, Minn.

The Stupid American?

AS A NEW SUBSCRIBER TO *IN THESE TIMES*, I have been encouraged to find that the paper seems to be questioning some aspects of its strident anti-Sovietism (editorial, *ITT*, Jan. 9) and "Politics back in the USSR" (*ITT*, Feb. 20). Sooner or later the "democratic socialist" movement in this country must face up to the fact that the U.S. is the sole aggressive and expansionist world power seeking unbridled political and economic domination.

The USSR, on the other hand, is an

economically weaker and militarily defensive nation that scrambles to prevent the U.S. from destroying what is left of the "actually existing" socialist countries (i.e., Cuba, Nicaragua). Furthermore, as "Alex Amersov" points out in his interview (and anyone who has traveled to Eastern Europe and the USSR knows firsthand), the peoples of the "actually existing" socialist countries are politically alive and aware. This contrasts sharply with the overall political ignorance and indifference that is pathetically evident in the U.S. Any person who claims to be a socialist certainly should find more hope in a society whose citizens have the freedom to develop their political and intellectual capacities rather than one that may have formal political "freedom" but whose citizens, on the whole, politically "brain-dead."

Charlie Kaften
Berkeley, Calif.

Editor's note: As a new subscriber, how does Kaften know about our "strident anti-Sovietism"?

Down or Up?

I WAS PLEASED TO SEE MY RESPONSE (*ITT* Feb. 6) to your January 9 editorial. But I am puzzled by the caption it was given: "Terrific, but tone it down."

My letter was intended to encourage the alteration of your perceptions of the Soviet Union. Our enemies snicker contemptuously when our press uses the vocabulary of their press. Such "aid and comfort" neither strengthens our movement for social change nor weakens enemy opposition to change.

I do not regard "Coming to terms with Soviet society" as a top priority. But looking askance at the USSR and its achievements seems to prevent us from purposefully looking at our own realities as socialists. For instance: the belief persists that the charade of bourgeois democracy is sacrosanct. There is fear (I repeat, fear) of politicizing a class-conscious working

class. From somewhere comes the gospel of market socialism. Overall there is faith that the logic and justice of our cause will ultimately overwhelm the enemy who will withdraw in shame.... These and other aberrations prevent strategic planning and render tactical effectiveness impossible.

The USSR does not need our approval of its political manifestations; neither is it deflected by our disapprovals. The fact is: the means of production in the USSR are owned by all. That is irreversible. It was brought off by councils of class-conscious working people at the point of production. The economic, political, social and cultural results are *their* creations. When we can perceive that we will be more able to confront our responsibilities as socialists.

Therefore, a more appropriate caption to my letter would be: Great! Now clean it up.

Rea D. Ward
Englewood, Fla.

"Defense" is offense

KEITH A. SINZINGER'S ARTICLE, "UNCOVERING the real defense spending" (*ITT*, Feb. 20), contained enlightening and important information on the true amount of military-related spending, but he fell into the old "newspeak" trap maintained by the federal government and the corporate media.

Sinzinger consistently referred to "defense" spending, when in fact most of the expenditures he mentioned have nothing at all to do with defending our country from military attack.

Around the same time Orwell wrote 1984, the name of the Department of War was changed to the Department of Defense (at least it wasn't changed to the "Department of Peace"). Henceforth, what was formerly "war" spending would now be "defense."

However, the U.S. invasions of Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic and Grenada were not "defensive" actions, so the money spent for such wars was not "defense" spending. Neither is the money spent for nuclear weapons and research, aid to foreign dictators and terrorists, or the interest being paid on money borrowed to pay for these activities.

The general public may support increased "defense" spending. The word makes them feel their lives and property are being protected from death and destruction. But they would be more reluctant to support "war" spending when Congress has not declared a war, or to increase a "military" budget when social programs are being cut back or dropped.

John Kinnevy III
Brick, N.J.

Keith Sinzinger replies: The reader's point about "defense" as a euphemism is well taken. The term was used throughout the article mainly because a variety of federal activities that support the military, while explicitly or arguably related to national security policies, are not military per se.

Into the streets

IN THE DEBATE OVER NEW APPROACHES the left can take to mobilize its constituency, I say forget the rhetoric about national deficits, supply-side and Marxist economics. Dump those interminable conferences wherein the left speaks to and comforts itself.

In the stakes for the presidency and Congress, none of this counts a twit. To our dismay, it has been proven that our national constituency has been taken in by the massive television propaganda thrown up by flashy-faced ideologues such as Ronald Reagan. And it has been established beyond serious dispute that despite such organs as *In These Times*, our natural constituency either stays at home or is motivated not so much by intellectual analyses as by feelings of pride, optimism, individual progress, security at home and abroad and family values.

What our constituency lacks today, and has lacked for a generation, has been per-

sonal contact and assistance from those of us who periodically solicit its vote. In virtually every discussion in every organ I have read about why the left continues to fail, this element is glaringly omitted.

One politician who recognized and stressed the importance of personal contact and assistance was Bobby Kennedy, now virtually forgotten. Politics, Bobby preached, is not an abstract or an academic activity. It is not an exploitative activity, but a caring one. The left could not and should not appear at a voter's doorstep every two or four years and solicit a vote unless it has earned one.

Instead, the left should empty its lecture and conference halls, and send the double-domes out into the streets to help senior citizens to reclaim their Social Security eligibility; to convince the poor to vote; to enable families to relocate to better housing; to convey information on programs for the disabled, and, yes, to help small business people.

By speaking *about* people as if they were issues rather than speaking *with* them, we have forfeited our right to their vote. But by getting off our lofty perches and getting to know people where and as they live, we can repossess this country.

Mitchel Kaldy
Rochester, N.Y.

Revisionist Mother Goose

MY GUESS IS THAT SOME PEOPLE around here are teaching their children "Three Blind Mice" with these words:

Borrow and spend
Borrow and spend
That's how it goes
That's how it goes
Give in to the Generals
Without any strife
Cut off the farmers
With a great big knife
Have you ever seen
Such a debt in your life
Borrow and spend
Borrow and spend

Charles C. Williams
Pinedale, Calif.

Reagan democracy

THE ABDUCTION AND BRUTAL BEATING death of the Polish priest Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko deserves the stern condemnation it has received for nearly four months since its occurrence on Oct. 19, 1984. And, as always, we need the balance and clarification provided by the excellent article by David Ost (*ITT*, Feb. 20).

But do not fall into the trap of hypocrisy that has characterized the mainstream press since the event. In Guatemala, the country the Reagan administration has recently praised for its "process of democratization," no less than 16 priests have been murdered or "disappeared" in the last four years.

The latest of these was Father Miguel Angel Montufar, reported by the *Guatemalan Church in Exile* to have been kidnapped by security forces on Oct. 23, 1984—four days after Fr. Popieluszko! He has not been heard from since. Needless to say, there has been virtual silence regarding these events. To add to this outrage we learn this week that while continuing to condemn the behavior of the Polish military, the Reagan administration is asking for more than \$35 million in increased military aid for the Guatemalan military.

Harold Pontiff
Guatemala Solidarity Committee
of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

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STC1

By Jim Sleeper

HARLEM ASSEMBLYMAN and mayoral candidate Herman Denny Farrell, whose paternal grandfather was Irish, got into politics some 30 years ago because the white Democratic clubhouse in Washington Heights bought uniforms for his integrated baseball team. "I know how coalition works, because it's in my blood," says this black Democratic county leader of the ever-whitening borough of Manhattan.

In politics, no less than in baseball, black solidarity has never been Denny Farrell's game. He plays it only to cover his flanks, as when he endorsed Jesse Jackson. Get Farrell in some moods and, to hear him tell it, racial solidarity is something Mayor Ed Koch dreamt up to keep himself in office.

The Village Voice's Jack Newfield, "the Conscience of New York," scourge of

City Council President Carol Bellamy now in the mayoral race, Cuomo has begun praising, as one whose "handshake is good" and whose performance is "superb," none other than Ed Koch. How dispiriting, too, that Newfield—who has done more than anyone to portray Koch as a destructive force in the city's life—has printed not a word against Cuomo for this.

Forget about baseball as the saving metaphor of democratic politics in this town. Forget Denny Farrell, the Coalition for a Just New York, Jack Newfield and Mario Cuomo. Don't look for other heroes on the diamond, either: Carol Bellamy only plays softball, and Ed Koch still doesn't know one end of a bat from the other.

Downward slide.

The sad fact is that Farrell's victory over Badillo represents something more destructive than a ninth-inning double-play by a few opportunistic Harlem politicians.

It represents, first, a slide back across



Denny Farrell (above), Jack Newfield and Carol Bellamy

ethnic/racial fiefdoms in government and of politics behind closed doors, is another fan of integrated baseball. He lists the century's three worst villains as Hitler, Stalin and Walter O'Malley, who tore the Dodgers' and Jackie Robinson's legacy out of Brooklyn. To hear Newfield tell it, Ed Koch has outdone O'Malley by knocking that legacy out of the political ballpark as well.

Gov. Mario Cuomo, who played with the Pittsburgh Pirates' farm team in Georgia, also believes in the game's power to bridge racial and class divisions. He had himself featured in TV commercials cracking the ball over the neighborhood fence during his 1977 mayoral campaign against Ed Koch. Cuomo might've been speaking for Farrell and Newfield when he told 500 members of Americans for Democratic Action in 1982 that his battle with Ed Koch for governor was "a fight for the soul of the Democratic Party" because Koch divides the fans. Cuomo, Farrell and Newfield have never tired of reminding us all that Ed Koch doesn't know one end of a bat from the other.

How strange, then, that when the black Coalition for a Just New York failed last month to transcend itself as expected and make former Congressman and deputy mayor Herman Badillo the champion of a black-Latino anti-Koch alliance, and instead succumbed to an 11th-hour black solidarity appeal, it was an appeal from—of all people—Denny Farrell (see *In These Times*, March 13).

How puzzling that, as the rest of the city's anti-Koch forces abdicated their candidate-selecting powers to this 42-member, all-black, virtually all-male, politician-dominated group meeting behind closed doors, Newfield never moved his lips against the racially exclusive process his hero, Assemblyman Al Vann, was chairing.

How dispiriting that, with Farrell and



the color line into a politics of desperation gripping many black leaders as racism gains ground in New York's civic life. If Farrell had been chosen by a group resembling his old neighborhood baseball team, updated to include women, he might have a case. Instead his emergence reflects some black leaders' retreat (see *In These Times*, Jan. 16) from interracial coalition-building at the neighborhood, local union and parish level, where their constituents need it more than ever before.

Farrell's triumph also represents months of miseducation and misleadership of the broader anti-Koch liberal-left by its would-be "king-makers," from Cuomo to Newfield and beyond. Not that they wanted Farrell—he is simply a fellow wheeler-dealer who has embarrassed them at their own game. They never challenged the racially exclusive, undemocratic process that fell for him, because they thought that process was going their way, toward the anointment of Badillo, whom Cuomo had appointed to head the state mortgage agency. And Badillo was a hero to Newfield, who had become an inside strategist in his campaign.

PERSPECTIVES

Something rotten in the Big Apple

Recrimination is cheap, but not as cheap as phony "nation-time" black politics and its unwitting support from the left. "No one who was an accomplice to this act of perfidy should be rewarded for it," wrote Newfield of Farrell's selection. "We are all responsible for our actions."

Newfield didn't elaborate. It's time somebody tried. We ought to learn all we can about the actors and illusions that subverted interracial coalition-building from the bottom up, virtually freezing women, labor, Hispanics and issue-oriented and neighborhood-based groups out of the process.

Black empowerment blues.

When black former deputy mayor Basil Paterson withdrew last fall as the consensus candidate of the anti-Koch forces, Vann and other Coalition for a Just New York leaders pledged to stay united with the rest of the rainbow to back a single challenger,



regardless of race.

No one questioned that Jesse Jackson's strong campaign in New York, chaired by Vann, had earned blacks a special place in the alliance. But by the coalition's own best logic, the only justification for endorsing a black this year—or, for that matter, any other candidate—was that he or she would command the carefully-woven interracial clout necessary to actually retire the intolerable Koch.

Some of the black coalition's members quietly favored Carol Bellamy, the mayor's strongest opponent in citywide polls. They knew she would run with or without their formal endorsement, and they decided they could live with her moderate liberalism if that was the price of uniting the mayor's opposition for victory. They knew, too, that while 37 of the Vann group's 42 members were male, 60 percent of the city's black electorate is female, including many who value Bellamy's work on programs vital to the single-parent households where 48 percent of the city's children live.

But Bellamy's favorable ratings were relatively soft. And her reluctance to take strong stands on issues and candidacies important to minorities had strained her relations with the coalition. When its leaders stipulated that anyone receiving their support must endorse Vann for Brooklyn borough president, Bellamy's refusal finished her prospects there and made Badillo the group's front-runner.

Badillo was no bargain, either, a point often forgotten amid the crocodile tears being shed over his last-minute abandonment. Though an eloquent minority spokesman, he has been an erratic leader, uncomfortable with the daily work of the half-dozen public offices he's held. He has run for mayor and lost three times, and gave little evidence this year of uniting Hispanic

voters, many of whom favor Koch, let alone carrying the black vote by much against Bellamy and Koch. And Badillo didn't come off well in public forums organized by ADA and the Unity Coalition, which had backed Frank Barbaro against Koch in 1981.

Small wonder that black leaders, doubting Bellamy and Badillo and still dreaming of re-enacting the Jackson campaign, found themselves with no internal defense against an 11th-hour call for racial solidarity, however dubious coming from the likes of Farrell. Most of them hadn't the strength of civil rights attorney C. Vernon Mason and minister Calvin Butts, who walked out rather than participate in Farrell's anointment and its betrayal of Badillo's promise, however tenuous, to forge a black-Latino coalition.

For Mason, the Farrell selection meeting was frivolous, a case of "blind nationalism that thwarted legitimate goals." Jill Nelson, a writer who worked with an informal, non-voting "think tank" of black social service professionals and academics to draft a "mayoral agenda" at the group's behest, only to have it completely ignored, recalled a line from Kool and the Gang: "If you hear any noise, it's just the boys." That sums it up. The coalition's petty macho concerns precluded organizing for real change.

Vann introduced Farrell to the city's media in a futile attempt to preserve the facade of black unity. As Hispanic outrage mounted, he became defensive: "We understood there'd be a reaction [among Hispanics], but there could even be a reaction to the reaction if it continues." One could feel the old nationalist teetering backward into old ways—a personal and political tragedy. Instead of re-living the Jackson campaign through Farrell's, Vann's group is doomed to prove Marx's dictum that history repeats itself imperfectly, "the second time as farce."

"We are all responsible."

But the failure of leadership isn't confined to blacks. Badillo gets blame for announcing months ago that he wouldn't run without the coalition's support—a play for that very support which conferred legitimacy on the group out of proportion to its strength.

Bellamy's campaign, meanwhile, has been a study in terminal dithering. Though it's now amply clear how right she was not to give the group a veto over her candidacy, she tried to have her cake and eat it too, delaying her own announcement out of "respect" for the "process," without really making herself a compelling choice for blacks.

Even the moderate white Koch supporters whom Bellamy must woo might have admired her for taking her campaign directly to black voters, over the heads of the coalition's putative leaders, as LaGuardia used to do, crying, "I can run on a laundry ticket and beat those political bums any time!"

Unfortunately, the most salient feature of Bellamy's campaign so far has been its strategic and substantive cowardice. By offending no one, she inspires no one but feminist yuppies. She seems to have no sense of what risks she can and should take with the sensibilities of "outer borough New Yorkers, black and white, in order to strike the deeper chords that respond to leadership. A campaign staff that barely knows the city outside Manhattan isn't helping.

Continued on following page

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The *Village Voice*, meanwhile, whose 150,000 circulation makes it the most influential publication of the anti-Koch forces, never questioned the Vann group's place on center stage; the paper had become hopelessly entangled in Newfield's taste for heroes, of whom Vann is one, and his penchant for behind-the-scenes king-making, in this case on Badillo's behalf, coupled with selective muckraking against those deemed hostile to his own agendas or those of his personal friend, Gov. Cuomo.

Not very subtly, Newfield polices the left for the governor, who talks with him frequently. The best example was "Let's Settle for Mondale," published early in 1984, when Cuomo was hosting open forums for the seven Democratic presidential contenders but had already decided to back Mondale's all-but-certain loss in order to gain the party establishment's IOUs for his own 1988 bid.

Long before the debate should have been closed, long before Hart and Jackson emerged, Newfield, who seems to want to become the Arthur Krock of a national Cuomo administration, dismissed all alternatives to the loser Mondale with one-liners. From San Francisco, he wrote a piece widely remembered for its self-important declaration, "Already, three reporters from other newspapers have called to ask me if Zaccaro is clean. He is."

The Cuomo connection was also evident in Newfield's intimate involvement in the elevation and subsequent defense of one of his "finds," the now-discredited city schools chancellor Anthony Alvarado. Selected with Newfield's frenzied support after Cuomo's commissioner of education conveniently disqualified Koch's candidate, Robert Warner Jr., Alvarado was soon forced to resign amid damning revelations about past conduct that Newfield should have investigated. Newfield wound up huddling with friends to plan Alvarado's defense, while *Voice* writer Wayne Barrett

attacked the media and the Koch administration for pressing the kinds of charges he himself had often pressed against others in the past.

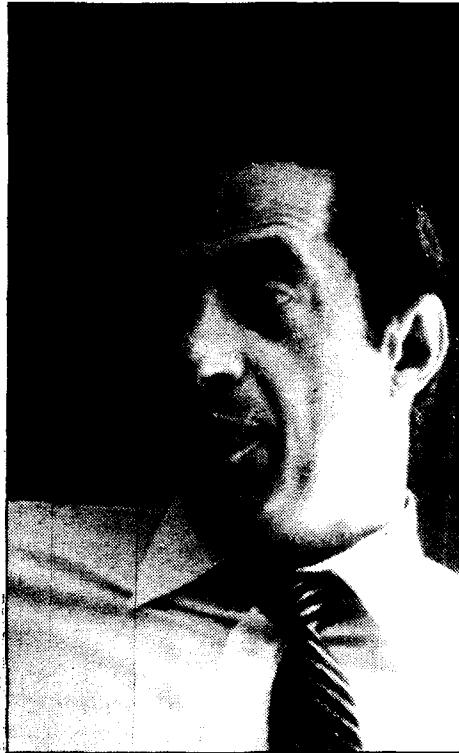
Last year Newfield became a self-described "informal emissary of the governor" on behalf of a bid for the Brooklyn Democratic Party leadership by a man who he'd described in *The Abuse of Power* as "a terminal cynic," Howard Golden, who had become Cuomo's choice against Koch's candidate, Anthony Genovesi. Golden won—and then botched last November's elections, losing two state legislative seats to the Republicans.

Sometimes the "Cuomo connection" is more Newfield's fantasy than anything else, and an exasperated governor has had to "disown" him. It's true, too, that *Voice* writers, including Barrett, have criticized Cuomo, whose fiscal policies are sometimes to the right of Koch's (even taking into account their different official responsibilities) and whose appointments are often abysmal.

The point is that the *Voice* abdicated its investigative and analytic responsibility to scrutinize Alvarado, Golden, Zaccaro and even Mondale, while taking gratuitous swipes at opponents no more disreputable, all in the service of Newfield's anti-Koch scheming and the governor's agendas, real or imagined.

So it is with Badillo, the hero, and Bellamy, the villain. Cuomo hasn't forgiven Bellamy for her widely-condemned support of Koch for governor in 1982—though Cuomo himself backed Koch strongly against Barbaro in 1981. And the left's exasperation with Bellamy has been compounded by Newfield's personal resentments against her and a former chief of staff.

Shortly after Cuomo's victory, Newfield published "Bellamy Sinking," a far-ranging essay that he chose to reprint last year in his book, *The Education of Jack Newfield*—an example, he claimed in the introduction, of his capacity for contrition about



Laurie Peek

misjudgments like that which had led him to lionize Bellamy in 1978 in another piece, "Bellamy Rising." In fact, he meant to end Bellamy's career.

Bellamy's career may be faltering, but she is nothing if not a trooper, and her second rising in this year's polls enraged Newfield. He unleashed such a torrent of unpublished (and unpublishable) villification of her that two of her most "progressive" backers, City Council Member Ruth Messinger and former Council Member Ed Wallace, now Bellamy's chief of staff, all but stopped talking to him. Cuomo, meanwhile, has taken to exchanging those lavish verbal bouquets with Ed Koch in the pages of the *Times*. That's going even farther than Newfield would to chill Bellamy's effort.

The *Voice*, cut off now from close relations with any of the viable candidates, has resorted to sour-grapes, anti-Farrell muckraking of the sort it denounced when others did it to the hapless Chancellor Alvarado, and which the paper might equally well do against Badillo, who has some skeletons of his own. The *Voice*'s sniping at Farrell only highlights its continuing entanglement with the processes and personalities which served him up and which it failed to criticize when doing so might have helped.

No champion, no voice.

I've worked for Carol Bellamy as a speechwriter and for the *Voice* as a regular freelancer, and so have contributed to the mistakes I've criticized in both parties here. I've had my battles with both sides, too.

New York's Gov. Mario Cuomo.

As Newfield says, "We are all responsible." But I'd still like to see the *Voice* regain its credibility as an honest partisan of democratic coalitions. We can't afford to lose Jack Newfield to his demons.

Until Bellamy gets off the dime and shows some leadership, though, and the *Voice* stops dragging its weary readers through cycles of hero-worship (Bellamy Rising, Alvarado Innovating, Vann Leading) followed always by the ugly writhings of its unrequited love, the people who toil daily in the community housing movement, health care organizations, democratic labor caucuses and other groups whose issues and struggles are eclipsed in the *Voice*'s obsession with political machinations, will be missing both a champion and a voice in the current campaign.

In a city where power corrupts in so many seductive ways, it's hard to emulate the best in, say, Boston's rainbow coalition of issue-oriented, community-based groups. It's tempting to turn to the insider's game, hoping to gain "influence" by attaching oneself to established power, or by resorting to the too-easy moral dichotomies of the corruption-fighting gambit as a way out of one's own mistakes and confusion.

Only two weeks ago, for example, when it should have been pondering the lessons of its irresponsible handling of the mayoral race, the *Voice* was saved from soul-searching by the ever-convenient foil of Ed Koch and his cronies, some of whom had been trying to buy the paper from Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch, the Australian tabloid tycoon, enjoys making more money and growing more powerful from Newfield's rantings. Yet the *Voice* was full of self-congratulation last week as it revealed the vast sums Koch's cronies were willing to pay to, as Geoff Stokes put it, "become Jack Newfield's boss."

It is all rather beside the point. The liberal-left in this city of power is sick from power's seductions and the illusions they nourish. As individuals, too many members of the left, like baseball players, have become well-heeled, self-congratulatory, even elitist. The king-makers are so busy pursuing their own dubious messiahs, short-cuts and vendettas that they've patronized and driven even the best black leaders, already hard-pressed by racism and deprivation, into the politics of desperation that anointed Denny Farrell.

Jim Sleeper, who has worked for Carol Bellamy and written for the *Village Voice*, is a New York-based freelance writer.

April 4, 5, 6

The 3rd Annual

Socialist Scholars Conference

"The Left in Crisis"

Boro of Manhattan Community College, CUNY
199 Chambers St. (near Trade Center), New York City

Join David Abraham • Gordon Adams • Charles Allen • Stanley Aronowitz • James Aronson • Pat Aufderheide • Joanne Barkan • Bernard Bellush • Jewel Bellush • Harry Boyte • Steve Brier • Leslie Cagan • Luciana Castellina • Montand Ceres • Lynn Chancer • Noam Chomsky • Amy Clampitt • Jean Cohen • Neloya Delano • Bogdan Denitch • Barbara Ehrenreich • Robert Engler • Cynthia Epstein • Barbara Epstein • Jeff Escoffier • Chester Feurstein • Frances Fox Piven • Ray Franklin • Dave Garrow • Rosanna Giamanco • Helen Goldette • David Gordon • Stanley Greenberg • Jack Hammond • Michael Harrington • Don Harris • Dorothy Healey • Ronald Hellman • Allen Herskovitz • Eric Hobsbawm • Branco Horvat • Irving Howe • Patrick Hughes • Jennifer Hunt • John Hyland • Mike Jacobson • Ira Katznelson • William Kornblum • Irwin Knoll • Joanne Landy • Robert Lekachman • Judith Lorber • Harry Magdoff • Patricia Mann • Deborah Meier • S.M. Miller • Vern Mogensen • Jo Ann Mort • Didier Motchane • Chantal Mouffe • John Nagle • R.L. Norman • Alex Nove • Carol O'Cleireacain • Paul Piccone • Paulette Pierce • Felipe Pimental • Adamantia Pollis • Katha Pollitt • John Rantz • Chris Riddiough • Hillary Rose • Jan Rosenberg • Saskia Sassen-Koob • Daniel Singer • Holly Sklar • Jim Sleeper • Ruth Spitz • Judith Stein • Paul Sweezy • John Trinkl • Yair Tzaban • Michael Walzer • Stuart Weir • James Weinstein • Cornell West • Ellen Willis • William Wilson

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SUMMER INSTITUTE 1985 sessions are August 4-10 and August 18-24. Cost, including room, board, tuition and recreational facilities is \$250-480, depending on income. Scholarships and daycare available. Deadline for application is July 15.

WRITE TO CENTER FOR POPULAR ECONOMICS ★ BOX 785 ★ AMHERST, MA 01004

The Haymarket Tragedy
By Paul Avrich
Princeton University Press,
535 pp. \$29.50

By Nick Salvatore

IT WOULD BE A CRUDE INTELLECTUAL presumption to suggest that a single book might restructure contemporary perceptions of the complex political and social history of the American working people. Nonetheless, Paul Avrich's *The Haymarket Tragedy* is a magnificent social and biographical study that reclaims for Americans today the meaning and importance of this central event in our past. Carefully researched, engagingly written and thoughtfully presented, *The Haymarket Tragedy* is a book that deserves the widest possible audience.

What actually happened on May 4, 1886, in Chicago has been a subject of much debate during the intervening century. That a bomb exploded during a workers' protest meeting, held in support of both the strikers at the McCormick Reaper Works and for the eight-hour day, is clear. It is also clear that in the days and weeks that followed scores of policemen died from wounds suffered that evening. But the identity of the bomb-thrower has never been proven, nor has the cause of such massive fatalities ever been carefully explored. As a piece of scholarly detection, Avrich's work is important on these and other issues. He shows conclusively that the overwhelming majority of policemen were fatally wounded in the aftermath of the bombing by their fellow officers—a consequence of the shootout with unarmed workers the undisciplined police force precipitated following the explosion.

Avrich also explores the question of the identity of the bomber. In 1886 and since, the official story that the eight Chicago anarchists arrested for the bombing were actually responsible for the deed has generated serious doubt. They were never charged with the actual crime at their trial—the prosecution simply did not have the evidence for conviction—but rather were found guilty under a vague and politically repressive conspiracy law.

Further, a majority of the accused were not present in Haymarket Square that evening, and those that were had either left before the explosion or were not in a position to have thrown the bomb. Among many supporters of the accused, especially on the left, these substantial doubts encouraged a conspiracy theory that pointed to an unknown agent provocateur as the actual culprit.

Avrich, however, suggests an alternative view. While it remains clear that the accused stood trial for a crime they did not commit, Avrich's new research points toward another anarchist, working in isolation from the Chicago movement, as the likely bomb thrower.

The very heart.

The power and insight of *The Haymarket Tragedy* transcends these important corrections of the factual record. It is an imaginatively constructed work that, like all good literature, entices the reader into the very heart of the story. As a superb piece of social history, Avrich's book examines in great detail the political and cultural context that was Haymar-



AMERICAN HISTORY

What did happen May 4, 1886?

ket. He carefully places Chicago's anarchist movement within the history of that city's labor movement and thus distinguishes the "Chicago idea" of anarchism from other anarchist trends that rejected trade union work in favor of the *attendant*. In presenting Haymarket as the culmination of more than a decade of tension between employers and workers, Avrich underscores the basis of the business community's implacable desire for the death penalty in this case.

For men such as George Pullman, Cyrus McCormick Jr. and Marshall Field, the newspaper headlines that threatened an anarchist *coup d'etat* were credible only to the extent that they fostered a public atmosphere useful to their desire to rid Chicago of some of its most effective labor organizers. This had been their goal in the decade prior to Haymarket, as Avrich makes clear in his discussion of the 1877 railroad strikes in Chicago; and, in the decade following the bombing, Pullman, McCormick and their allies sought to finish their task with the help of the federal government during the great railroad strike of 1894.

Where one stood on the fate of the accused anarchists was as powerful a statement of personal and political values for many in that generation as a similar decision would be for a later generation regarding the trial of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Avrich's delineation of this divide is both powerful and, at times, surprising. A number of Chicago businessmen and civic leaders, for example, many of whom had publicly demanded the death penalty

during the trial in 1886, had by November 1887 come to support a public appeal for clemency. Others, however, chose differently. Gov. Richard Oglesby essentially delivered his power to pardon the accused into the hands of Marshall Field, who gleefully blocked any use of that power.

More surprisingly, perhaps, was Henry George's position. As a candidate for mayor of New York with strong working-class support in 1886, George had supported the accused. Less than a year later, driven perhaps by hopes of political gain in his new electoral race, George publicly repudiated that position and claimed he

could find "no ground for asking for executive clemency."

More consistent, if no less disturbing, was the position of Terence V. Powderly, the Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor. Powderly attacked the accused immediately following their arrest, charged that they had joined the Knights "to cover up their diabolical schemes," and led the successful fight in the 1887 convention (a month before the executions) to defeat a resolution for clemency.

But Samuel Gompers, the leader of the young American Federation of Labor, reacted differently. No proponent of anarchism himself, Gompers nonetheless publicly supported the accused on the grounds that the trial was palpably unfair, and he prophetically insisted that labor "must do its best to maintain justice for radicals or find itself denied the rights of free men."

Biography.

Paul Avrich presents this complex story largely through the medium of biography. Vignettes of such important figures as Lucy Parsons, William Holmes and defense lawyer William P. Black appear throughout the book, but the core of Avrich's creative approach focuses on Albert Parsons and August Spies, two of the eight accused anarchists. Avrich recreates their personal histories, carefully examines their specific political odyssey and then weaves these elements into an insightful political and social analysis. The result makes intelligible to contemporary readers much of the inner motivation that ultimately led these men to the scaffold.

In sharp contrast with the headlines at the time (and with much traditional historical analysis since), Avrich draws a picture of Parsons, based on newly uncovered evidence, that is especially poignant, provocative and intense. By the time Parsons voluntarily surrenders himself to stand trial for a crime he did not commit, even the most skeptical reader will consider anew the profound dignity and simple heroism of this man so frequently portrayed as the arch-fiend himself.

In his portraits of Parsons, the other anarchists and their accusers, Avrich seeks out that point where personal motivations and political commitment intertwine. His success in this returns to the historical actors their individuality and gives the reader a rich subtle

IN THESE TIMES MARCH 20-26, 1985 13
history of the complex political culture that surrounded the events in Haymarket Square.

Avrich's work makes abundantly clear why the memory of those who were executed deserves honor and recognition; but a detailed analysis of why that honor is absent in this country is beyond the scope of this book. But this historical study does suggest some possible explanations. Avrich notes, for example, that the hysterical reaction to the bombing was not limited to either the business classes or to such national figures as Powderly and George. A majority of the delegates to the 1887 Knights of Labor convention did support Powderly, as did all but a handful of editors of the nation's labor press. Indeed, throughout the nation, many workers, possibly a majority, both organized and unorganized, immigrant and native-born, supported a swift, summary "justice" for the accused.

This reaction stemmed from two major causes. For a majority of late 19th-century working people, anarchism (and political

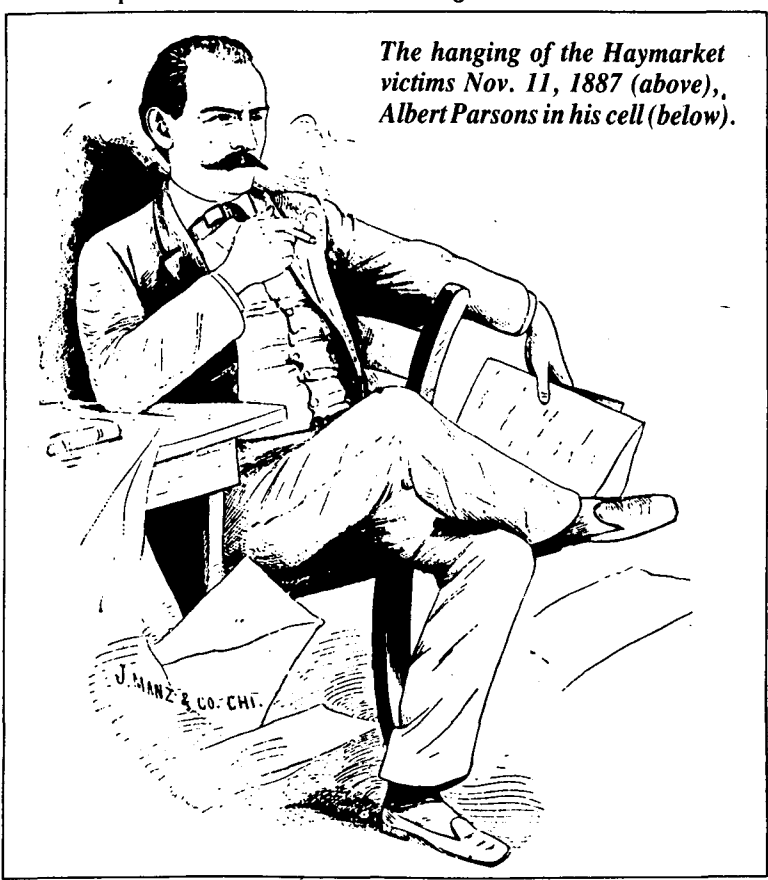
*A bomb went
off during a
workers'
protest
meeting in
Haymarket.
Avrich's work
gets to the
heart of this.*

radicalism in general) remained external to their lives and something of a threat—at least in the form it was often presented—to their identities as citizens, workers and local community members. Important exceptions to this existed, to be sure, but a surprising number of workers simply were unable to follow Gompers when he articulated the connection he perceived between American workers and the accused anarchists.

Second, as both Avrich and Henry David in his 1936 history, *The Haymarket Affair*, make quite clear, the bombing in Haymarket Square "brought on the first major 'red scare' in American history." This not only largely sealed the fate of the Chicago anarchists but, when considered in the light of the critical strikes at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Homestead, Pa., and Pullman in the decade that followed, this red scare precipitated an important alteration in the direction of American organized labor.

It was not by accident that by the late 1890s Gompers and his associates in the Federation had personally rejected the radical impulses of their youth and sought to strengthen their current position with sustained public attacks on radicals of every description. This mingling of radicalism, immigrants and un-American activities, which became canonized in organized labor's reaction to the Bolshevik Revolution following 1917, had its origins and crucial development in the events at Haymarket some 30 years earlier. ■

Nick Salvatore is the author of *Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist*.



*The hanging of the Haymarket victims Nov. 11, 1887 (above),
Albert Parsons in his cell (below).*

ART <> ENTERTAINMENT



André Barnabé

AFRICAN MUSIC

Afrobeat creator "rots in prison," urges supporters to struggle

By Dave Marsh

FELA ANIKULAPO KUTI, THE great Nigerian bandleader who invented Afrobeat (a fusion of James Brown and more traditional African rhythms) was arrested at Lagos airport on Oct. 4 as he was boarding a plane bound for the U.S. to make his first visit in a decade. On November 8, Fela began serving two concurrent five-year sentences for illegally possessing £1,600 in British currency.

According to the highly reliable Viv Goldman of *New Musical Express*, Fela is being held in a one-room cell with 80 other prisoners. *Africa Now's* December issue (U.S. edition) describes him as in failing health, "almost a broken man."

Fela had apparently withdrawn the money from his bank account in England, declared it upon entering the country and also when departing (declarations that were "lost" before the trial). *Africa Now* reports that Fela's brother, a doctor, held a news conference in England in which he pointed out that the customs agents who supported Fela's account were arrested before the trial and that Fela was allowed to speak to his attorney for only three hours—and that only after the prosecution had rested its case. This is the first trial Fela has lost in the 450 cases brought against him by Nigerian police.

Fela has been a persistent critic of Nigeria's various autocracies for many years and, in fact, declared himself a presidential can-

didate in 1979. But according to an interview he did with Don Snowden in the December issue of *The Reggae and African Beat*, Fela was uncertain about his relationship to the Buhari junta.

"It's very difficult for me to say now," he told Snowden by telephone from London, just before returning to Nigeria to prepare for the U.S. tour. "As a matter of fact, the government is trying to lure me into participation in the politics of Nigeria now, but that doesn't really mean that my situation is very cool with my government. This is because we can't get raw materials in Nigeria to make records, so it's very difficult for me to judge how the government feels about me and what and when they want to attack me.... I don't really know, but the government at home now is not positive, not positive toward the kind of ideology I want."

Journalist Stephen Davis, among others, suggests that the real reason that Fela was arrested and imprisoned has to do with the fact that he was about to visit the

Fela has been a consistent critic of Nigeria's various autocracies.

U.S., which is the biggest buyer of Nigerian oil. According to this view, Buhari and his fellow generals simply don't want to risk high profile criticism in the U.S. Fela's brother has testified that three different reporters came to him quoting Buhari as saying he hopes Fela will "rot in jail." (The last time Fela was arrested, he was so badly beaten he had to abandon sax playing, previously the central mode of attack in his music.)

A number of petitions have been circulated to the Nigerian government in protest of Fela's incarceration (one of these, which originated in the San Francisco area, was signed by Nigerian musician Sonny Okosun), and Fela's band, Egypt 80, continues to tour under the direction of his son Femi in an attempt to raise money for his defense.

Stephen Davis suggests that outraged Fela fans can send letters to Gen. Mohamad Buhari, Head of States, Lagos, Nigeria Embassy in Washington. *Africa Now* quotes a note Fela recently wrote from prison to a friend: "I will never, never stop fighting. This [jail] only makes me stronger, and I hope it's giving my people more courage to do their part in the struggle."

Those not familiar with Fela's torrid and intoxicating music will be able to work themselves into simultaneous rage and dancing delirium by checking out such albums as *Original Sufferhead* and *Black President*, two studio sets issued in the U.S. by EMI-America. (Davis reports that EMI has already dropped Fela, so these

may not be easy to locate. Try Down Home Music.) A number of Fela LPs are also available on import; four to watch for are *Alagbon Close* (Editions Makossa), which details a previous incarceration; *Zombie* (Mercury), the record that got Fela beaten; *Fela Ransome Kuti Vols. 2* (French EMI), a terrific two-disc set; and *Kalakuta Show* (Editions Makos-

sa), recorded after the raid on Fela's compound, Kalakuta Republic Africa. ■

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Dave Marsh edits *Rock & Roll Confidential*, from which this was excerpted (\$15 a year, \$22 foreign, from RRC, Dept. ITT, P.O. Box 1073, Maywood, NJ 07607.

MEDIA B E A T

Humanities Hatchet Man?

When he headed the National Endowment for the Humanities, the \$140-million-a-year agency that promotes public understanding of the liberal arts, William Bennett used to speculate about abolishing it, but he never tried it before he left to become secretary of education. Now the Reagan administration has nominated a replacement who might practice what he preaches: Edward A. Curran, one-time headmaster of a private girls school and head of "Professionals for Reagan-Bush" in 1980. Curran has had a rocky career in government so far. Appointed director of the Education Department's research institute, he told the president the institute could be eliminated, without consulting his boss, Secretary of Education Terrel Bell. Bell was incensed, and Curran hurriedly resigned. Then appointed deputy director of the Peace Corps, he was promptly stripped of responsibility after clashing with higher-ups. "He's not a compromising fellow when he's morally certain that something is true," admitted a conservative colleague. Curran's nomination is so controversial even within the administration that his nomination papers have encountered inexplicable delays on their way to the Senate. Not that anyone's proposing cage-rattling alternatives—on the alternative candidates list are, among others, Charles Ritcheson, a conservative historian from the University of Southern California, and neo-conservative scholar Gertrude Himmelfarb.

Mixed Signals at Radio Martí

Radio Martí, named for Cuba's independence hero and intended as a U.S. government news service beamed at Cubans—presumably duped not only by their own media but by the commercial radio they pick up from the U.S. and neighboring islands—was a pet project of this administration and its Cuban-American backers. Not only left-of-center types opposed it; so did many middle-of-the-road members of Congress. Those who didn't object because the project smacked of propaganda, or because it duplicated existing services, feared it would force Cuba to act on its threat to jam U.S. radio signals if Martí went on the air. Some suggested the project was *intended* to force jamming, and so to justify what one Defense official called a "surgical strike" against Cuba. Unable to kill the project, Congress scaled it down and handed it over to a reluctant Voice of America, which was given ample resources to pull together daily programming, including a whopping 188-person staff in two branches (Miami and Washington, D.C.). The Voice's way of dealing with this hot potato has been to spend development money and stall start-up. Spokespeople say it's hard to find qualified journalists within the Cuban-American community. Many who are qualified avoid it. Even at the Voice of America, most Cuban-American employees have refused the chance to work at Martí, and the position of director has been vacated twice. Insiders say the office is overrun with State and secret agency personnel, whose agenda is unclear. Some think the Voice is hoping the project will be abandoned before it becomes a reality; others believe the threat of Martí—and the process of setting up the hypothetical service—are handier tools in dealing with Cuba for this administration than an actual service would be. Now, 17 months into the project, Martí has missed its latest air deadline, with no promise of meeting its next. But loud conservative protest over this latest fallthrough suggests the project won't die quietly.

Say It in Pictures

Independent film, video and slide show makers, some working under contract to labor unions or issue organizations, have by now produced a sizeable body of work on labor issues and working life. Finding such a film when you need it, though, can be tricky; guides are often outdated before they're printed. The latest issue of *American Labor*, a publication of the American Labor Education Center (1835 Kilbourne Place, NW, Washington, DC 20010) addresses the problem, with an updated guide to hundreds of labor-related slideshows, films and videotapes. The list includes addresses of distributors, a bibliography and resource list, and it covers a breadth of topics and styles, even ranging into foreign features when the subject matter is relevant. Items range from the aged nuts-and-bolts short *Shop Steward* to Fassbinder's classic *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* to the recent documentary *Code Gray*, about ethics in health care. Annotations are refreshingly frank and aimed at organizers.

Update

The title of the CIA comic book promoting anti-Sandinista sabotage (mentioned in Media Beat Feb. 13) is the *Freedom Fighter's Manual*.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

CHICAGO, IL

March 21-24

1985 Marxist Scholars Conference, Cobb Hall, University of Chicago. Sessions on political economy, scientific/technological revolution, culture; keynote by Michael Parenti, *News Media & Class Control: Technology or Ideology?* Program from Marxist Educational Press, c/o Anthro. Dept., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455; (612) 922-7993. For Chicago info: (312) 475-7269.

March 23-24

An art exhibition and weekend of activities in commemoration of slain union organizer and community leader Rudy Lozano will be held March 23rd and 24th, at Inkworks Press, 1826 South Bishop in Pilsen. The weekend exhibit will feature paintings, sculpture, printmaking and photography. More than 20 artists will participate, including several prominent muralists. A special program honoring slain Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero will take place on March 24th, on the anniversary

of his assassination, five years ago in El Salvador. Other special events include participation by area high school art students, local musicians and singers and videos from Central America are planned for the weekend. Admission is free. For info call 738-4000.

March 24

"Harold Washington, Chicago and the Future"—Public forum on the future of the Harold Washington Administration and the possibilities for progressive political reform in Chicago. Featured speakers: Joseph Gardner, former director Political Education Project; Miguel DelValle, Chair, Latino Commission; Betty Willhoite, Board of Directors, Community Renewal Society. Discussion to follow. \$3.00, Second Unitarian Church, 656 W. Barry, 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by Democratic Socialists of America. (312) 871-1986.

March 25

Maggie Kuhn, national convenor of the Gray Panthers, internationally known spokesperson for the old and young, will speak on "Aging in the Urban Community." A panel discussion by UIC faculty will follow, including Dr. Linda Kaeser, Dr. Louis Rowitz, Dr. Shirley Buttrick and Dr. George Hemmens. Sponsored by UIC School of Urban Planning and Policy and the Gerontology Center in cooperation with the Gray Panthers. UIC Behavioral Sciences Building, Room 250, Harrison and Morgan Streets, 7:30 p.m.

NEW YORK, NY

March 22-23

"...and Economic Justice for All!" Riverside Church Disarmament Program's national spring conference, March 22-23 in New York, will detail how debt, deficits and defense are connected to poverty, injustice and war. Speakers: Amott, Barnett, Coffin, Dellums, Ehrenreich, Stanback; music by Seeger. For information: RCDP, 490 Riverside Dr., NYC 10027; (212) 222-5900, x238.

March 24

Steve Zeluck life-long revolutionary and trade union activist, founder and editor of *Against the Current*, died on March 1st, at the age of 63. His death was the result of mesothelioma, caused by exposure to asbestos while working in the Philadelphia Navy yard at the beginning of World War II. Steve, a student, teacher, husband, father, comrade and friend will be sorely missed by those who came to know and love him. A memorial meeting will be held on Sunday, March 24th at 2:30 p.m., at the Machinists Hall, 7 E. 15th, New York City. In lieu of flowers the family requests that contributions be sent to *Against the Current*.

March 30

"Fifth Genes and Gender Conference: Women's Work and Changing Technology," held at Hunter College, West Building, Lexington and 68th, New York. Pre-registra-

tion \$6.50; Registration \$7.50. Information: (718) 891-9057. Challenging "Genetic Determinism" and its effects of women's work choice, advancement, pay. Saturday, March 30th, 8:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

WASHINGTON, DC

March 22

"DSA DC/MD Friday Forum: Michael Harrington, national DSA co-chair, and Christopher Hitchens of *The Nation* debate "Religion: Opiate of the People or Force for Social Change?" Co-sponsored by *The Nation*. March 22 at 8:00 p.m. at Machinists Hall, 1300 Connecticut Ave., NW. \$4 donation, \$2 low-income. For more information, contact DSA DC/Md, (202) 207-7693.

ST. LOUIS, MO

March 26

National Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest, St. Louis Chapter, holds its founding general meeting Tuesday, March 26, 3:30-6:00 p.m., Women's Building Lounge, Washington University. This Nader-spinoff organization is national, but each chapter has its own agenda. Join with progressive faculty and others to change higher education and the nation.

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ANTI-INTERVENTION PROGRAM STAFF, Mobilization for Survival. Duties: Develop organizing materials, national campaigns, nationwide actions, communication among organizers. Current focuses: Central America, Middle East, Deadly Connections. Misc. office duties. Requirements: Organizing experience on third world intervention; writing, typing, coalition building, interpersonal skills. Commitment to MFS goals (Zero Nuclear Weapons, Ban Nuclear Power, Reverse the Arms Race, Meet Human Needs). Long hours. \$200-250/wk plus health ins., 3 wks paid vacation. Begins 6/17. Deadline 4/29. Resume and cover letter to MFS, 853 Broadway, Rm. 418, New York, NY 10003.

MAGAZINE EDITOR, Mobilization for Survival. Duties: Solicit, edit, layout, paste-up articles for quarterly magazine. Solicit ads and subs. Work with editorial board and volunteers. Requirements: Writing, editing, production, organizing skills. Familiarity with peace movement. Commitment to MFS goals (Zero Nuclear Weapons, Ban Nuclear Power, Reverse the Arms Race, Meet Human Needs). Long hours. \$200-250/wk plus health ins., 3 wks paid vacation. Begins 4/29. Deadline 3/26. Resume and cover letter to MFS, 853 Broadway, Rm. 418, New York, NY 10003.

CHICAGO'S METROPOLITAN TENTS ORGANIZATION is hiring a full-time organizer with at least two years community or related organizing experience. Send resume to MTO, c/o NTIC, 954 W. Washington, Chicago, IL 60607.

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DALLAS

THE WORLD DOES

By Pat Aufderheide

IN AN INTERNATIONAL symposium of TV executives, veteran media analyst Erik Barnouw tried to explain why U.S. television was so popular internationally. American programs, he argued, offer "a homogenized product that represents no one culture. It is formula fiction that endlessly recycles a mythology of its own, a mythology that can be understood anywhere but is really of nowhere."

Indeed, it does seem like the whole world is watching us—or some version of us—through the peculiar one-way window of television. While countries like the U.S. and Japan import less than 5 percent of their programming, in the Third World more than half of the programming is bought from industrialized countries. And there is, as Barnouw implies, something "never-never-landish" and eternal about *I Love Lucy's* domestic crises and the escapades of *Charlie's Angels*.

But that doesn't mean that American TV programming goes out to the world culture-free, laundered of its Americanness. It always arrives in other people's homes with a foreign accent, and—for better or worse—it reflects what America means to other countries and cultures.

Consider the massive appeal of a program like *Dallas*, still riding high in the U.S., only a few weeks ago topping the ratings. In the same period, it topped the ratings in West Germany. And in England, people were fuming because the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) had pulled the last 13 episodes of the season, angered because next year's shows had been sold to a rival network. So many complaints and petitions flooded in that the BBC reinstated the series.

Dallas is seen in more than 90 countries around the world, and it has rearranged the daily lives of millions of people. In West Germany, community groups have changed their meeting times to let members catch the show, while in Italy, restaurateurs count on fewer diners on *Dallas* nights. One session of the Turkish parliament was cut short so that members could rush back to their TV sets for the latest episode. And the show is so popular in Israel that during Purim festivities, when children dress up in costume, a new outfit has appeared: a three-piece suit and a Stetson.

The ugliest American.

What's behind the international addiction? Some think it merely shows that big business is an international phenomenon, that J.R. is Everycapitalist. As one foreign businessman told a *Los Angeles Times* correspondent, he could be "any person with power, of any nationality."

But others think it's important that J.R. is not only an incarnation of capitalist evil, but also an American. The show indulges, under this logic, a common love-hate attitude toward Americans, whose international stereotype reeks of crass greed. As one Bangladeshi schoolgirl put it, "I guess some Americans are pretty nasty." And a Mexican television researcher asserted that "people suppose *Dallas* presents the image of an American family."

In short, the rest of the world may have found in J.R. the ugliest American. The show indulges a worldwide fascination with America's vaunted wealth and power, while confirming the ancient belief that love and loyalty are destroyed by powermongering.

Now, a wave of imitative adult

soap operas is suggesting that a love-hate relationship to the tortured lives of the rich and powerful may cross cultural borders. The BBC is producing a series retailing sexual and financial family intrigue, called *East Eight*.

In Peru, where both *Dynasty* and *Dallas* are popular, the lookalike adult soap opera *Paginas de la Vida* draws higher ratings than either of them. And in January, Western European viewers watched the debut segment of a one-hour French series called *Chateauvallon*.

Chateauvallon bears some resemblance to *Dallas*; but it also suggests that J.R. is a peculiarly American creation.

In *Chateauvallon*, political, corporate and sexual intrigue meld in a tale of two families, one a wealthy old-guard publishing dynasty and the other an upstart family of nouveau-rich Yugoslav immigrants. Vulgarly and luxury mix in one scene where a family patriarch feeds caviar to the pigs on the estate. Significantly, the show is located in the near past—before the rise to power of the Socialist government of Francois Mitterrand.

The show airs over a state-owned channel, and receives high praise from the Ministry of Culture, whose information chief calls *Chateauvallon* "the TV event of the year in Europe."

This may seem ironic, since France's Minister of Culture Jack Lang habitually uses *Dallas* as a catchword for American cultural imperialism. But the show's director traces the ancestry of *Chateauvallon* to a French pop culture tradition—steamy melodramatic series that ran in popular magazines of the 19th century.

There are other ways in which the show is distinctively French. Greed is supplanted by prestige as a motivation and retaining wealth seems more important on this series than is making money in itself. Political intrigue is the motor of plots that in *Dallas* run on corporate machinations.

These differences, for the show's scriptwriter, reflect French social and political reality. Further, he said in a *Washington Post* interview, a French series could never create a character as thoroughly despicable as J.R. *Dallas* works in France because he conforms so neatly to French stereotypes of Americans. "We French are quite ready to make fun of Americans," he said, "but we don't like making fun of ourselves."

The show has drawn good ratings, but it has bombed with critics. In *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Françoise Giroud found that the show, by substituting local ingredients for foreign exoticism, resembled "a chicken in cream sauce with mushrooms, without the mushrooms. Or the cream." And in *Liberation*, Annette Levy-Willard wrote that the show's greater tastefulness lost the "filmed comic-strip" essence of *Dallas*.

There are places in the world where *Dallas* is not the darling of audiences who can liberate lingering resentment against American clout in their living rooms. In Egypt, where television is state-owned and where fundamentalist Muslims are an influential minority, the series was suspended last year for excessively dwelling on wealth, promiscuity and drinking.

In Brazil, it seems audiences prefer home-grown intrigue. Neither *Dallas* nor a 1982 soap opera similar to it fared well with viewers, in a nation where nationally-produced and distinctive soap operas fill the entire evening's programming. Anthropologists and sociologists are still scratching their heads over the question of why *Dallas* bombed in Japan, where it was unable to attract even a 5 percent prime-time audience the one time it was introduced.

photos: PAUL COMSTOCK